



THE INDEPENDENT

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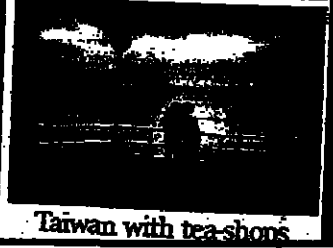
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When parents fear teachers

EDUCATION, COMMENT, ARTS & FAST TRACK

Ulster set for new, major step

A NEW phase in the Northern Ireland peace process came into focus last night as it emerged that the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, is to meet Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, for face-to-face talks.

The unprecedented meeting will follow on from next Monday's gathering of the leaders of the province's political parties. Reliable sources said last night that the one-to-one talks could take place as early as next week.

Although Mr Trimble may avoid the public handshake sought by the Sinn Féin president, the proposed meeting is highly significant. As Northern Ireland's First Minister, Mr Trimble is expected to hold a series of separate sessions with the individual party leaders in the province. He will now include Mr Adams in that series.

The revelation came on a day of major developments in the peace process, with Sinn Féin finally agreeing to appoint a contact with the international commission on arms de-commissioning - its chief negotiator, Martin McGuinness.

The announcement was welcomed by the British and Irish governments. Tony Blair described it as "a practical and important step forward", and said it would push the peace process forward more quickly.

The Irish government described the appointment of Mr McGuinness as a further important step in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, and a new and significant initiative. It further described as a "landmark" the statement on Tuesday from Mr Adams that violence should be "a thing of the past".

BY ANDREW GRICE AND DAVID MCKITTRICK

has been made in the peace process so soon after the Omagh atrocity. Sources said they hoped Mr McGuinness's appointment would reassure Unionist opinion because it was "a firm deed rather than playing word games". Sinn Féin refused to be

In London and Dublin, the Commons and the Dail met simultaneously to rush through far-reaching new anti-terrorist legislation aimed at ending the activities of the Real IRA, the group responsible for the Omagh bombing.

However, there was a setback for Mr Blair last night when his attempts to reassure Labour MPs about the anti-terrorist measures were rebuffed. Sixteen backbenchers voted against a government motion to cut short the Commons debate.

In the Dail, the Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, said the Real IRA had disgraced themselves, adding: "You cannot hope to take on the people of Ireland and win."

In another development, Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, yesterday ordered the release of two Spies, Guayle, James Fisher and Mark Wright, who had been serving life sentences for the murder of a Catholic teenager in north Belfast in 1992. Her action was condemned by the family of the victim, and by Sinn Féin.

President Bill Clinton flies into Belfast today for a short stay that will include a visit to Omagh. American pressure is believed to have been important in bringing about the flurry of activity which began with Mr Adams' statement on Tuesday.

In the Commons, Mr Trimble warned Mr Blair that he feared the measures to crack down on groups such as the Real IRA, might prove ineffective. He believed the Irish government might then opt for the internment of terrorist suspects, a power retained in Dublin but not included in the British legislation. Mr Blair replied that Britain "could act without

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drawn on whether the appointment should be seen as a sign of an IRA willingness to start disarming. But it said it hoped it would push the peace process forward more quickly.

Hillary avoids state of Clinton union

BY GLENDA COOPER

SHE FLEW into Belfast, one of the most powerful women in the world, ready to speak out for women's rights and their key role in the Irish peace process. It didn't matter - all everyone wanted to know was whether she was still furious with her philandering husband.

Yesterday the First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, was addressing the Vital Voices - Women in Democracy conference. But thanks to Mr Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, the former White House intern, any words of wisdom Hillary Clinton said were subsumed into feverish speculation about the State of the Union - the Clintons' union that is.

Onlookers wanted to know whether the big chill between Hillary and her husband was ongoing or whether the trip to Moscow had gone some way to thawing the cold war as she gave her first public speech since her husband's confession. The speculation was even more intense because Hillary was said to have been working on this speech in the White House when her husband was two floors below testifying to Kenneth Starr about his "inappropriate relationship" with the intern.

When things look bad, Mrs Clinton has always slapped on the warpaint, put on her best clothes and fought back with her "don't-dare-feel-sorry-for-me" attitude.

Still, for a feminist the fact that her appearance (navy blue suit, her gestures (minimal), and even her lipstick (very discreet) would be considered more important than the message she was trying to get across about women's role in the peace process must have been frustrating.

What the First Lady actually said in her speech was to reiterate the US's firm stance on terrorism and its support for the peace process, pay tribute to the "courage and strength of generations of women" who had contributed to change in the political climate (she particularly praised Mo Mowlam's role, including her talents as a dancer). But no one was listening. Rather everyone wanted to know if she winced as she said the words "my husband" (she did not refer to him by any other name).

Certainly the 500 British and 75 American women at the Waterfront Hall gave her an enthusiastic welcome. But despite her stirring words, live TV coverage of her speech was abruptly pulled after 10 minutes. After all, she hadn't said anything about Monica.



Hillary Clinton: Paid tribute to the women who had contributed to the peace process Dan Chung/Reuters

Police in 12 countries swoop on child sex ring

AN INTERNATIONAL child pornography "club" run on the Internet has been smashed by British police officers after a chance discovery at a house on the south coast.

About 50 men from 12 countries were arrested and more than 100,000 images, including sexually explicit pictures of girls and boys as young as two, have been recovered during a series of raids.

BY JASON BENNETTO Crime Correspondent

Police believe they have uncovered a paedophile and pornography network, known as the Wonderland Club, in which the requirement for membership is to have at least 10,000 explicit pictures of children stored on computer.

Detectives managed to crack the secretive Internet club, protected by a system of passwords and codings, which members used to exchange sexually explicit images of children.

In at least one case in Britain, a man had been filming himself having sex with children and swapping the pictures with club members. Two of the men arrested in England were found to have nearly 90,000 pornographic photographs of children, described by the officer in

charge of the operation as "stomach churning". School teachers were among those arrested worldwide.

The network was discovered by chance after a Sussex police officer visited a house in St Leonards, near Hastings, late last year following a tip-off by United States customs officers who were investigating a separate porn ring.

In one of the biggest co-ordinated international operations, about 105 addresses throughout the world were raided early yesterday morning.

Eleven men were arrested in the UK after raids on 14 addresses in London, Sussex, Oxford, Berkshire, Kent, Gloucestershire, Middlesex and Norfolk.

In the US, where the club originates, there were 32 raids; Germany saw 18 and Italy 16.

There were also raids in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Norway, Portugal, and Sweden.

Police will attempt to trace the abused children and offer them counselling.

Detective Superintendent John Stewardson, who led the operation by the National Crime Squad, said children had been abused on a massive scale to produce material to feed the

international ring. "The children abused were of both sexes and some, it would appear, were as young as two, although we don't know because we don't know who these children are yet. The content would turn the stomach of any right-minded person."

The case highlights growing concern about the use of the Internet by paedophiles to swap information and images.

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Are you ready to challenge convention



Allow Diana to rest in peace, say sons

By KATE WATSON-SMYTH

PRINCES WILLIAM and Harry yesterday appealed for their mother to be allowed to rest in peace. In a statement issued two days after the first anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, her sons thanked the public for its sympathy during the past year but said that the time for public mourning was now over.

Sandy Henney, Prince Charles's press secretary, said: "Throughout the last year, since the death of their mother, Prince William and Prince Harry have been comforted enormously by the public sympathy and support they have been given; it has meant a great deal to them and they have asked me to express their thanks once again to everyone."

"They have also asked me to say that they believe their mother would want people now to move on - because she would have known that constant reminders of her death can create nothing but pain to those she left behind. They therefore hope, very much, that their mother and her memory will now finally be allowed to rest in peace."

William, 16, and Harry, 13, who enrolled at Eton yesterday, are concerned about constant references to the princess and the "Diana industry".

Ms Henney said their words were addressed not only to the media but also to commercial interests marketing Diana memorabilia and to the public who continue to mourn her.

Although the scenes of grief on the first anniversary of her death were muted compared with last year when she died in a car accident in Paris, she has continued to make headlines.

In a form of mass hysteria, immediately after her death, scores of people queuing up to sign the books of condolence claimed to have seen a vision of the Princess of Wales in a portrait of Charles I at St James's Palace. Earlier this week, it was claimed that a photograph taken of the funeral cortege showed the princess' face in the leaves of a tree.

Thousands of people returned to Kensington Palace last Sunday to lay flowers, but although public appetite for anything to do with Diana remains voracious, a sign that the public might be feeling "grief fatigue" came 10 days ago when a sponsored walk organised by the memorial fund was attended by only 300 people instead of the expected 15,000.

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Richmal Crompton, the author of the immensely popular Just William stories, whose character Jimmy (right), is to be resurrected after being forgotten for nearly 50 years

Children's fiction finds a new hero in Just William's long-lost chum

By DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

IT IS BEING described as a rediscovered classic. Stories by Just William author Richmal Crompton that appeared briefly in the 1940s, and were then forgotten for nearly 50 years are to be re-launched next week.

The hero is a seven-year-old boy. He gets into scrapes; disasters just seem to happen to him, usually when he is doing his best to be helpful. There is the time he paints his tortoise green and red in the hope that it can replace his neighbour's lost parrot. There is the time he gives the little girl next door (on whom he has a crush) a mouse for her birthday when what she really wants is a mouse.

Sounds familiar? It is. "Jimmy" is in literary terms a remarkably close relation of the accident-prone William Brown, Just William himself. Such a close relation that it is unlikely any author now would get away with inventing a character so reminiscent of her



Illustrations to the Just William stories (left), which have frequently been dramatised (centre), and (right) for the rediscovered Jimmy stories

most famous creation. But in 1947 when the late Richmal Crompton was delighting the country with her William books, London's old Star evening newspaper asked her for more stories to serialise. The William tales were under contract to a publisher, so Miss Crompton came up with Jimmy.

His adventures appeared in the newspaper, were published in book form as *Jimmy* and *Jimmy Again* in 1948 and 1951,

and then went out of print. Now Richmal Ashbee, Crompton's niece, has asked Macmillan, as the original publishers of William, to put them back into print. When they appear next week they will be with the original illustrations by Thomas Henry (the William illustrator) which did not appear in the original Jimmy books. These illustrations were located in the Star archives.

Macmillan believes that the

enduring popularity of William could now ensure similar popularity for Jimmy and create a new hero in children's fiction. As well as publishing *Just Jimmy* this month, they will publish a second volume *Just Jimmy Again* next year.

In addition, a further 25 Jimmy stories have been found in the British Library. These have never been published, and Macmillan hopes to publish these in a future volume,

though it as yet has no contract to do so.

Lesley Taylor of Macmillan Children's Books said: "Just Jimmy is that rare literary beast - a rediscovered classic. These stories disappeared in the early fifties, and have been forgotten about until now. We are particularly pleased to be able to publish them with their original illustrations."

Richmal Ashbee agreed yesterday that aside from the dif-

ference of a slight stammer there were clear similarities between Jimmy and William. "Richmal Crompton wanted to make Jimmy different," she said, "but he is again her sort of boy - mischievous, inventive and original, and often achieves good when he doesn't intend it."

"I like the stories, but Jimmy can't, I think, avoid being a shadow of William. I don't think Richmal Crompton was surprised that the *Just Jimmy*

stories didn't take off. She knew people really wanted William. But the climate is different now, and people who like William will be interested to read these."

Richmal Crompton, the child of a curate schoolmaster, was born in 1890. She never married, and in 1923 an attack of polio left her permanently disabled. The first collection of William stories, *Just William*, was published in book form in 1922. The enormous popularity of William kept Crompton writing about him up to her death in 1969.

Jimmy never enjoyed the same fame. But London's *Star* newspaper did endeavour to make him something of a hero, running a competition in 1947 to find a local boy who was most like Jimmy. The winner won a fortnight's seaside holiday for himself and his family. The newspaper cutting gives a flavour of the times. Nearly 2,000 Jimmy fans were at the Odeon Cinema in Kensington for the finals to hear the nine-year-old winner recount his scrapes.

Blair criticises proposal to axe News at Ten

TONY BLAIR yesterday declared his strong opposition to ITV's plans to abolish its flagship *News at Ten* programme.

Although the Prime Minister will not intervene directly in the decision on the bulletin's future, which is a matter for the Independent Television Commission (ITC), he hopes that by signalling his views he will persuade ITV to think again.

ITV confirmed its intention to replace *News at Ten* and the 5.40pm news with one 6.30pm programme anchored by Trevor McDonald. ITN, which makes the news for ITV said it has signed a new long-term contract with Mr McDonald.

In an attempt to persuade the ITC it has not abandoned its commitment to news, the network announced a further half-hour of late news at 11pm. ITN will also provide a 10pm bulletin for ITV's new digital television channel ITV2.

ITN's chief executive Stewart Purvis said the news organisation was "excited by the challenge" of the early evening news programme, but journalists at ITN mostly condemned the ITV announcement.

Mr Blair's official spokesman said that the Prime Minister wanted *News at Ten* to remain in its slot "because of its deserved reputation for reporting often complex political issues in a very digestible and even-handed way."

The spokesman added that Mr Blair believed it would be re-

grettable if the proposed changes "led to any marginalisation of TV news or any further move down-market in the media generally."

Mr Blair's intervention echoes a successful move by John Major to block an ITV plan to abolish *News at Ten* in 1993 while he was Prime Minister.

Aides say Mr Blair watches the bulletin "reasonably often", although he sometimes "switches off" from politics by turning off the TV when the news starts.

ITN journalists have deep misgivings about losing *News at Ten*, arguing that its timing enables ITV to cover events such as Commons votes which happen after the BBC's main 9pm bulletin. Michael Brunson, its long-serving political editor, said: "My view is that, given the way public life works in this country, *News at Ten* has a tremendous advantage and has given us the edge over the BBC over the years. But we will accept whatever decision is made by ITV and the ITC."

Michael Jackson, chief executive of Channel 4, hinted strongly that ITV's plan is ill-conceived. "Here's a programme that is right at the heart of the schedule. It's live. They have an icon in Trevor McDonald and it connects with the audience on a daily basis. It will be a challenge to replace it."



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State sell-off errors led to 'billions' lost

A CATALOGUE of errors in the Conservative privatisation programme left the taxpayer potentially billions of pounds out of pocket, Parliament's public spending watchdog claimed yesterday.

In the most comprehensive survey of all state sell-offs to date, the Commons Public Accounts Committee called for much tighter controls to ensure that public assets were never again sold too cheaply.

The report, published yesterday, set out strict guidelines to ensure that the mistakes were not repeated by the current government in its own privatisation plans.

More than 150 businesses have been privatised in the past 20 years, from small enterprises to big firms such as BT, British Gas and the rail, water and electricity companies.

The MPs concluded that privatisation had on the whole been a major success, raising more than £90bn for the public purse while revitalising ailing industries and improving services for customers.

However, in many cases, much greater proceeds could have been achieved if the then

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

government had insisted on staged sales of shares and clawback deals to recoup unexpected profits.

The taxpayer could have recouped at least £15m from the rail rolling-stock companies if clawbacks had operated.

Water and rail companies were sold off for a fraction of their value, with one estimate claiming that some £30bn more could have been raised from the water sale.

Alan Williams, Labour MP for Swansea West and one of the committee members who called for the report, said: "There has been a profligate disregard for the public interest and getting full value for money for state assets."

The committee said that better value for money would be achieved if shares were sold in stages rather than one single "big-bang" public flotation.

"In a succession of flotations, culminating in the sale of the Regional Electricity Companies in 1990, departments sold all the shares on privatisation, only to see the price of

shares increase rapidly, often as soon as trading commenced," the report stated.

A staged sale of the atomic energy company, AEA Technology, could have netted an extra £110m, for example. A similar sale of National Power and PowerGen shares meant that the taxpayer had secured an extra £2.6bn.

The chairman of the committee, David Davis MP, said that the privatisation programme had been very successful as a whole but "mistakes" had sometimes been made in its implementation. "It is vital that departments [act on] lessons learned," he said.

Mr Williams added: "In any previous century, one would have been talking impeachment when you look at the appalling way public assets have been squandered and virtually given away, in some cases, I would say, deliberately."

Although Labour opposed many of the Tory privatisations of the past two decades, the Government will continue some sell-offs. As well as selling shares in state-owned businesses, surplus assets will be disposed of and others used commercially.



The Eurofighter taking off at Farnborough yesterday for its launch as the Typhoon

John Voos

Historic link of Europe's warplane

BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

THE LONG-awaited Eurofighter was launched yesterday with the same name as a Royal Air Force bomber used during the Second World War.

The combat aircraft - a £40bn joint venture between Britain, Germany, Spain and Italy - was officially unveiled as the Typhoon at the headquarters of British Aerospace at Farnborough in Hampshire.

Although the air forces of the nations behind the project will continue to call the aircraft Eurofighter within Europe, it will be exported under the Typhoon name - which is common to all four languages of the countries behind the venture.

The British government has invested around £15bn in the Eurofighter project which will safeguard 80,000 jobs in the United Kingdom alone. The RAF has ordered 232 Eurofighters and the aircraft will replace the Tornado as a linchpin of the nation's defences. Deliveries to the RAF are due to begin in June 2002.

The partner countries, who are taking 620 of the aircraft, are targeting a global market for more than 800 combat aircraft worth £70bn. They face fierce competition from the American F-16 made by Lockheed Martin.

Teachers split over performance pay

TEACHERS WILL fight Ministers' plans to introduce performance related pay in schools, leaders of the profession's biggest union said yesterday.

But a survey by the National Union of Teachers shows that a surprising number - nearly one in three - back the idea.

And nearly eight out of ten believe that their pay should depend partly on their ability to demonstrate that they have particular skills.

Doug McAvoy, the union's general secretary, said that the organisation would resist any crude link between pay and exam results.

A special union conference later this month is expected to reject outright the idea of performance related pay or payment by results.

Ministers are drawing up a Green Paper on the future of the profession and its salary structure.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, has already said that he is interested in "a more sophisticated system of payment by results".

He believes that higher rewards for classroom teachers are vital to ease the current recruitment crisis.

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Payment by test and exam results was tried and discredited at the end of the nineteenth century.

Though most of the 12,000 teachers surveyed - 62 per cent - opposed a direct link between pay and performance, the findings show that teachers' attitudes are changing.

In the past, extra pay has been offered mainly to reward extra responsibility or experience.

Now, around 80 per cent of teachers think those who can show that they have "specified competencies" should receive more.

The competencies, which have yet to be worked out, might include, for example, skill in teaching reading or children with learning difficulties or administrative talents.

Mr McAvoy said that such skills might be measured partly by monitoring teachers in the classroom.

More than 90 per cent of teachers are unhappy with the present salary structure which means that most primary teachers progress quickly to the top of the pay scale and then cannot earn more unless they

take on additional responsibilities. There is criticism, too, that promotion may depend on the whim of a headteacher.

Mr McAvoy warned Ministers to note the clear majority against performance related pay.

"It can never be fair, linked as it is to pupil performance which can vary from school to school and from year to year as the pupils change."

But he said: "Teachers have emphasised their belief that the achievement of specified targets for competencies deserves recognition on their salaries."

"A national scheme based on the achievement of such targets would be fair and open and would not be based on a subjective achievement of high performance."

The National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers has long accepted that extra pay for teachers who have reached the top of the basic scale (around £22,000) should depend partly on a sensible appraisal system.

Nigel de Gruchy, the union's general secretary, said: "We accept that, if the Government is going to pay £30,000 a year to classroom teachers, it will want to have checks on quality."

IN BRIEF

Plea for Lockerbie suspects

THE LIBYAN lawyer for the two Libyans accused of the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 said yesterday his clients should serve their time in Libya, not Britain, if they are convicted. Ibrahim Legwell said he wanted further guarantees on the rights of the suspects from those outlined in the plan endorsed by the United Nations Security Council last month. The suspects - Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah - are to be tried in the Netherlands by three Scottish judges according to Scottish law. If convicted, they will serve their sentences in a British prison.

Noye to fight extradition

KENNETH NOYE, suspected of murdering Stephen Cameron in the M25 "road rage" attack, will fight moves to extradite him to Britain, his solicitor said yesterday. Henry Muner said the publicity about Mr Noye's case over the last two years meant he could not have a fair trial. Mr Noye is being held at the maximum security prison in Puerto de Santa Maria, near Cadiz, but is expected to be moved soon to Madrid where all extradition cases are heard.

Suspension at Welsh Office

A SOCIAL services inspector at the Welsh Office has been suspended pending the outcome of a police investigation into allegations of indecent offences against boys at an approved school dating back to the Seventies. Derek Brushett was arrested last week. A Welsh Office spokesman yesterday confirmed the suspension.

Crystal Palace cinema challenge

PLANS FOR a multi-screen cinema and entertainments complex at Crystal Palace in south London were thrown into doubt yesterday when objectors won the right at the Court of Appeal to launch a legal challenge.

Cats cannot read your mind

GENERATIONS OF cat-haters who have nevertheless ended up with cats on their laps may be puzzled to hear that zoologists at Southampton University have shown that cats really cannot tell if you love or hate them.

Two held for Belize stabbing

TWO MEN have been arrested in connection with the murder of a British aid volunteer stabbed to death in Belize, the Foreign Office said yesterday.

Anna Lightfoot, 27, from Saddleworth, Greater Manchester, was in the former British colony helping to organise volunteers on a Raleigh International project.

A second post-mortem examination and forensic tests have confirmed Miss Lightfoot died of multiple stab wounds. There was no evidence of sexual attack.

A spokesman for the Foreign Office said the head of the National Criminal Investigation Branch of Belize, who is leading the investigation, has reported to the High Commission that two men are in custody. "One of them has confessed to being involved in the murder of Miss Lightfoot and has implicated the other man," he said.

The body of the aid worker, who disappeared on 24 August on a walk to a village to buy provisions, was found about a quarter of a mile from a dirt track that ran between a banana plantation and a forest.

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Murder suspects offered BBC slot

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

MARTIN BASHIR, the BBC reporter whose interviews with Diana, Princess of Wales and Louise Woodward brought him to international prominence, is on the verge of clinching interviews with the five men accused of killing the black teenager, Stephen Lawrence.

Mr Bashir wrote to the men requesting a meeting and is understood to be seeing them later today when a deal is expected to be finalised.

The interview is expected to be broadcast as part of a Panorama programme when the public inquiry into Stephen's death finishes later this year.

The five men, David Norris, 21, Neil Acoart, 22, his brother Jamie, 21, Luke Knight, 20, and Gary Dobson, 22, have so far refused to answer direct questions about the murder.

In June, under duress, they appeared before the public inquiry, but gave only evasive answers when cross-examined.

If they did agree to be interviewed on television, the men would presumably be asked the one question that the inquiry was prevented by a High Court injunction from posing: whether or not they killed Stephen.

Mr Bashir was yesterday unavailable for comment but in his letter to Jamie Acoart, on BBC-headed paper, he asks for a "brief meeting".

He writes: "For what it's



The BBC wants to interview the men accused of killing Stephen Lawrence Reuters

worth I am the BBC reporter who recently interviewed Miss Louise Woodward, the au pair found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in Boston. I also conducted an interview with the late Diana, Princess of Wales. Both were transmitted within the BBC's flagship current affairs programme Panorama.

"I was wondering if there was any chance of a brief meeting with you? I confirm that any conversation would be strictly confidential and would not be published, transmitted or repeated to a third party without your prior consent."

The Lawrence inquiry team was said yesterday to be "gob-smacked" by the prospect of a television interview. A spokesman said: "I can't believe that they'll answer questions any more fully than they did here, but certainly we will be following this development with a great deal of interest."

Peter Bottomley, the former MP for Eltham in south London, where Stephen lived, said he was very surprised that the five were considering an interview. "If they want to clear their names they could have answered questions at the inquest. It will be very offensive to the Lawrence campaign."

Neil Acoart, Gary Dobson and Luke Knight were cleared of murdering Stephen and cannot be retried. Charges against Jamie Acoart and David Norris were dropped before going to court.

Their apparent agreement to be quizzed by Mr Bashir also raises questions about the terms of the interview. Although he has been granted two of the most sought-after interviews in recent years, he has

been accused of not being tough enough on his subjects. During the Diana interview it seemed as if the questions had been pre-arranged and that he backed off at key moments. The same criticisms were made when he spoke to Ms Woodward, the former au pair convicted in the US of killing baby Matthew Eappen. When Ms Woodward hinted that she had her own opinions as to how the baby died, he changed the subject.

Max Clifford, the public relations consultant, is thought to be behind the five men's decision to talk publicly. He said yesterday that they had consulted him and although he declined to represent them, he advised them to talk to a "respected news organisation like the BBC" and suggested Mr Bashir.

Managers and recruitment agencies reckon the present demand is being fuelled by two forces: the increasing tendency of staff to become their own boss, as "contractors", and the

unavoidable deadline of the year 2000. All companies need staff who will pick over their existing systems to identify and fix problems that would otherwise result from the "millennium bug", caused by the changeover from 1999 to 2000.

Because the work is unexciting and must be done to a set timetable, many companies have been forced to offer bonuses - up to 30 per cent of salary in some cases - to persuade permanent staff to stay.

Even so, many are choosing instead to become self-employed as contractors, which means they can demand fees of more than £1,000 each week across the country, and up to 50 per cent more in London.

"We had a graduate who after one year's experience de-

cided to go freelance as a computer contractor, and he is now making the equivalent of £50,000 annually," said Ann Zinkin, a director at the London-based Artech Computer Recruitment.

"We have more and more candidates who come to us, having done two years on a permanent contract, and can get silly money as a contractor."

David Aaronovitch, Review, page 3



Martin Bashir wants to interview the men accused of killing Stephen Lawrence PA

C4 lines up sex fest for autumn

BY JANE ROBINS
Media Correspondent

CHANNEL 4 went back to its roots yesterday and launched an autumn schedule based on large doses of sex.

This season's theme, stretching across the networks, is the "sexumentary". Channel 4's most prominent offering being *Anatomy of Desire*, a documentary series which "reveals everything we never knew about sex from the sexually arousing qualities of body odour to the real difference between male and female sex drives".

Sex Bomb comprises four programmes of "frank and intimate history of four decades of sexual revolution in Britain told through the experiences and memories of those who live through it". It will start with the Pill, says Channel 4 boss Michael Jackson, and end up with "Biba Uncovered".

Not to be outdone, *Hooked* is a six-part series investigating the pursuit of pleasure from 1900-1975. Sexual pleasures are to be explored with a range of illicit accompaniments including drugs, drink, smoking and chocolate.

Power List will ask "where does power lie in Blair's new wonderland", and ask a panel of people including Roy Hattersley, Heather Rabbatts, Lambeth Council's chief executive, and social commentator Peter York to vote on the 500 most powerful people in Britain today.

The *Clintons - A Marriage of Power* manages to combine both sex and power in a three-part journey from Whitewater to Lewinsky. And *Portillo's Progress* provides the latest in a series of quests to determine whether the Tories will ever find their way back into power.

In the early days of Channel 4, the network met its remit to deliver a "distinctive" schedule mainly through delivering sex programmes such as the *Red Light Zone*. Expanding out of sex into other "distinctive" areas is plainly proving difficult - but Michael Jackson believes power, drugs and possibly death, have potential.

David Aaronovitch, Review, page 3

Computer workers log on to rich pickings

DEMAND FOR computer staff is driving the number of the jobs - and the salaries they command - to a new high.

A survey shows that in the first half of the year there were 130,000 jobs, offering combined wages of £2bn, advertised in the specialist magazine *Computer Weekly*, while one company that runs a Web-based service e-mailing job vacancies to IT

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

staff says the figure is probably higher.

"We have advertised more than 600,000 jobs, and by the end of the year it will be over a million," said John Witney, co-founder of Jobserve, which sends details of the jobs on offer at 1,200 computer recruitment

agencies in Britain to almost 60,000 people every day. "The growth in jobs offered is about 5 per cent per month." The number of vacancies in *Computer Weekly* is about double that of the 1992-93 recession.

Skills shortages have been endemic throughout the commercial computing sector's 30-year history. Because the technology keeps changing at

a rapid pace, it creates the need for fresh sets of programming abilities, while old systems often have to be kept running because they are the bedrock of a company's operation.

Managers and recruitment agencies reckon the present demand is being fuelled by two forces: the increasing tendency of staff to become their own boss, as "contractors", and the

unavoidable deadline of the year 2000. All companies need staff who will pick over their existing systems to identify and fix problems that would otherwise result from the "millennium bug", caused by the changeover from 1999 to 2000.

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David Aaronovitch, Review, page 3

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McGuinness faces his thorniest test

AS A man accustomed to the keeping of secrets, Martin McGuinness is likely to turn in a Sphinx-like performance on the question of whether and when the IRA will decommission any part of its formidable armoury.

But although that question seems destined to remain unanswered for some time, his nomination as Sinn Féin's contact with the international body on decommissioning is viewed in London as a major step forward in the peace process.

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

The Londonderry republican has been an important figure in the republican movement since 1972, and has been at the heart of its leadership for almost two decades. In recent years he has been one of Gerry Adams' closest personal associates and one of the key players in the peace process.

With his reputation as a hardliner he commands respect throughout the IRA, a sta-

tus which means he is seen as a guarantor that republicanism, for all its recent innovations, does not lose sight of its ultimate goals. This role as the man who provides assurance to the militants has been of vital importance at many points.

The decommissioning issue will put him to the test once again, since it is one of the thorniest issues of the peace process. On the one hand opinion throughout republicanism seems set against any decommissioning. On the other, de-

commissioning has been widely described as an indispensable part of the Good Friday agreement.

The British and Irish governments and the various other parties involved are all keen to make progress on decommissioning. It therefore seems unlikely that movement should take place on issues such as the new political structures and on the release of prisoners in the absence of some progress on decommissioning.

The two governments have

deliberately stopped short of making decommissioning a condition for movement on the various other fronts. This is not, however, a sign of wishing to downgrade the issue, but is rather born of a tactical consideration that the republicans are more likely to respond to generalised pressure than to specific ultimatums and direct challenges.

Sinn Féin's approach to the decommissioning issue has been to take refuge in generalisations. The party's represen-

tatives, including Mr McGuinness, repeatedly say that they wish to see all guns taken out of Irish politics and an overall demilitarisation of the conflict.

Mr McGuinness has proved an electoral draw for Sinn Féin, becoming MP for Mid-Ulster earlier this year as well as winning a seat in the new Belfast assembly. He began his negotiating career in 1972 when, despite being on the run as an IRA suspect, he was one of a group of republicans flown to London by the RAF to meet the then

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, William Whitelaw.

The following year he was jailed for IRA membership in the Republic, and in 1974 was again locked up in the south on the same charge. He once said he had been "fired at by the British Army on countless occasions".

During the secret contacts between republicans and the Conservative government in the early Nineties, he acted as chief contact. When the talks eventually resumed, Sinn Féin de-

scribed him as representing them but the Government insisted he had spoken for the IRA.

During the public talks of recent years he has again functioned as chief negotiator, meeting first government officials and then ministers on numerous occasions.

He once said that decommissioning was "a stalling device and a bogus argument" created by the Tory government to postpone talks. He has several times met Tony Blair, the Prime Minister.

Relief and anger greet release of guardsmen

THE EARLY release of two Scots Guardsmen jailed for shooting dead an Irish teenager was greeted yesterday with relief and joy by their families and supporters. But the angry family of the unarmed Catholic they killed accused Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, of lying to them.

Those campaigning to free James Fisher and Mark Wright declared that an injustice had been corrected. Relations of Peter McBride, the 18-year-old they shot dead in Belfast, bitterly countered that justice had, in reality, been sacrificed for cynical political expediency.

Mr McBride's family also expressed their anger that the convicted guardsmen have been allowed to stay in the Army "and get their guns back". They said they would be taking legal advice over this, and that they and their friends intended to picket whichever barracks the soldiers are based at in the future.

Ms Mowlam said she would be pressing for Fisher and Wright to be discharged from the Army. However her ministry acknowledged the decision would be up to the Ministry of Defence. Private Lee Clegg, who was freed after shooting dead a teenage joyrider, continued with his army career, and was subsequently promoted.

After their early morning release from Maghaberry prison, in County Antrim, the two guardsmen arrived at an army base in Catterick, Yorkshire, for a photo-call. They refused to answer any questions or even say their names. Others, however, had plenty to say

BY KIM SENGUPTA

about the circumstances of their release.

There was little pretence among government officials in Belfast that the freeing of the two was divorced from the broader political picture. Ms Mowlam authorised the move at a time of considerable trepidation among Unionists about the imminent release of paramilitary prisoners. The release of the two guardsmen, it has been felt, would help to counter that.

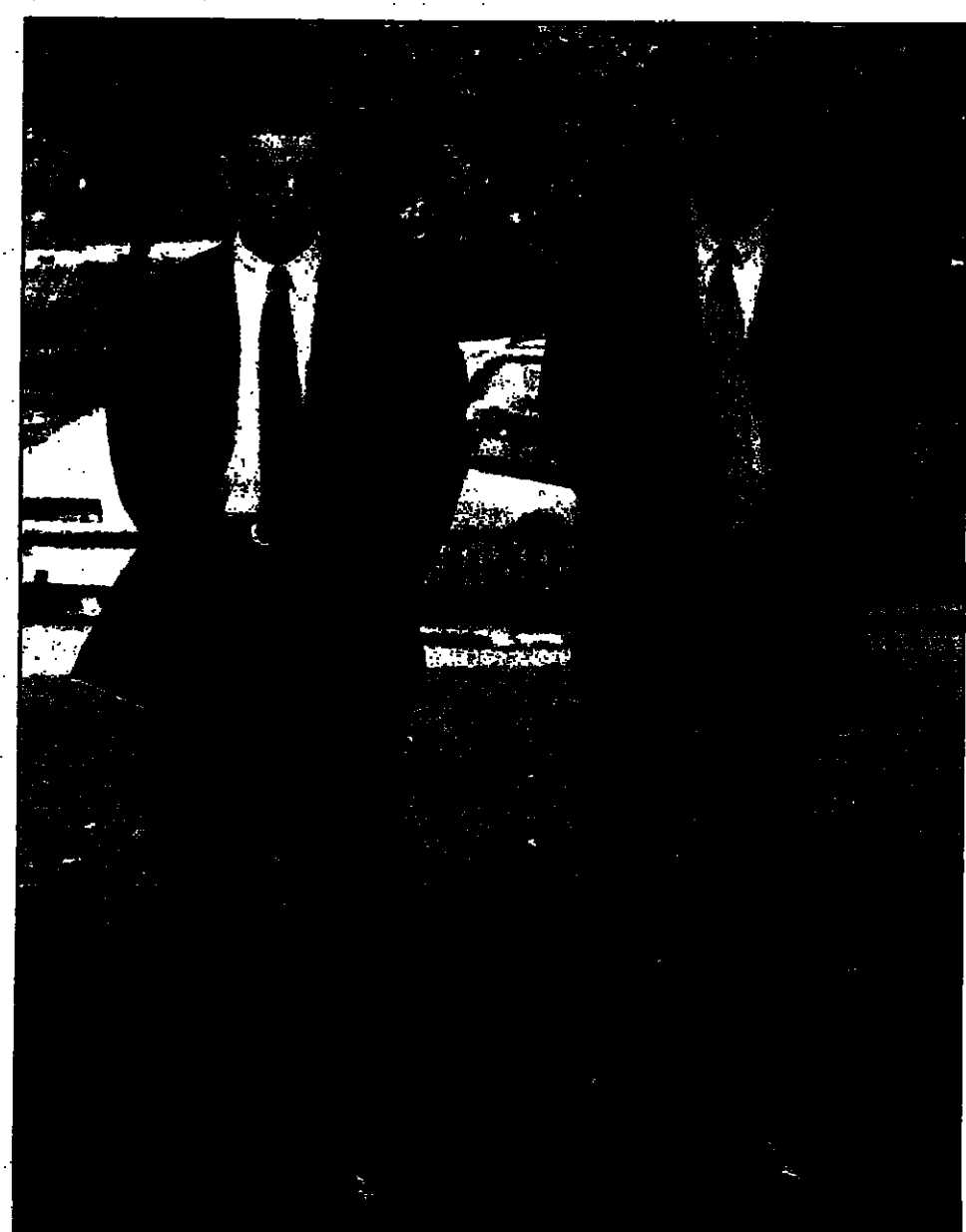
The development also comes as the IRA takes the first steps towards possible decommissioning, and on the eve of President Bill Clinton's visit to Northern Ireland.

Two pressure groups representing families with members killed by the security forces are expected to meet the President, and have stated that they intend to raise the issue of the two guardsmen. They would like to arrange a meeting between Mr Clinton and the McBrides.

Wright, 25, from Arbroath, and Fisher, 30, from Ayrshire, killed Mr McBride, who has two children, in the republican New Lodge area of Belfast in September 1992. They were convicted in 1994 and sentenced to life imprisonment a year later.

Fisher's sister, Angela, said that Ms Mowlam had phoned that morning to break the news. She said: "We are absolutely delighted... we hope to see Jim soon."

Ms Mowlam had also called the McBride family and received a very different reaction. Peter McBride's father, also called Peter, accused her of



The released Scots guardsmen Mark Wright (far left) and Jim Fisher at Catterick Barracks yesterday after being freed from prison. They had been jailed for life for the murder of Peter McBride, whose sister Kelly (right) wept yesterday as her father spoke about the soldiers' release. Owen Humphreys/ED; Alan Lewis/Photopress



"lying" and said that they considered her action to be "disgraceful and sickening".

Mr McBride said Ms Mowlam had assured his family six weeks ago that she would let them know before a decision was made over the soldiers' release. She called Peter's mother on Tuesday night to say a decision was due very soon.

Next morning the McBrides heard the soldiers were free. Mr McBride spoke to Ms Mowlam after hearing the news, he stated later: "I told her I was disgusted at how in-

sensitive she was because these two are getting out just two days before the anniversary of Peter's death. Is it because Bill Clinton is coming here? Is it because of the statement by Gerry Adams?"

Explaining her decision to free the two men Ms Mowlam said she was mindful that the soldiers were on duty trying to counter terrorism at the time of the shooting, and that the first terrorist prisoners are to be freed.

Mr McBride was shot when he ran away after being stopped

by an army patrol. He had a record of petty criminality but no political or terrorist involvement. Fisher and Wright chased him and opened fire, because, they claimed, they thought the plastic bag he carried contained a nail bomb.

Lord Justice Kelly, sitting without a jury, found the two soldiers guilty at their trial in 1994, but reserved judgment pending the outcome of the ruling by the Law Lords in the case of Lee Clegg, who was jailed for life for the killing of the teenage girl in a stolen car. Private Clegg's appeal was re-

jected, and Justice Kelly sentenced the two guardsmen to life imprisonment in 1995, but recommended that mandatory life sentences for murder should be abolished.

Two years later, retired officers from Wright and Fisher's regiment launched a well publicised campaign for their release and obtained the support of several MPs and public figures. The campaign did not challenge the convictions, but held that Mr McBride was the victim of a "tragic error of

judgement" and the two soldiers had spent long enough in jail.

Martin Bell, the independent MP for Tatton who had been campaigning on behalf of the guardsmen, said yesterday: "This was long overdue, but we are very pleased... It was never just that they should have been tried and convicted as though they were common murderers or terrorists."

George Foulkes, the international development minister and James Fisher's MP, declared: "I welcome the decision by Mo Mowlam, I believe

it is the right one, and the one I have asked her to make. I do understand the feelings of the McBride family, but those feelings are shared by the families of the victims of the terrorists who are being released under the peace process."

Lord Tebbit, the former Tory cabinet minister, who also backed the release campaign, called for compensation to be paid to the soldiers. He said: "The task now is to ensure that their convictions are quashed, that they are fully rehabilitated and compensated."

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Grumbles of dissent rock House of common cause

IT SHOULD have all gone so smoothly. On paper, nothing could go wrong. The Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Bill – so tough, so “draconian”, so focus-grouped and “targeted”, so ass-kicking, so likely to impress, say, a visiting American president – was going to be made law by force majeure and no one was gonna stop it.

Labour backbenchers had their prepared questions ready, the Tory front bench had promised its support, give or take a couple of amendments, the Liberal Democrats were on hand. Apart from a lot of liberal whingeing in the quality press, everyone would be warbling from the same sacred foolscap.

It all started just fine with a confident statement from Tony Blair of facts and casualty statistics about

the Omagh bomb atrocity. “The whole house will join with me in voicing our condemnation... We regard with contempt the excuses of those who try to explain it away...”

All around the Prime Minister, burnished faces looked suitably grim, some of them it seemed only recently dragged back from Mediterranean sun-lounger and Florida pedalo – Jack Cunningham, a phenomenal shade of burnt Seville orange, Andrew Mackay, the Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland, an alarming hue of boiling terracotta.

Everyone supported the PM – who could not when the issue is bombing and the coffins of small babies? William Thompson, MP for Tyrone and therefore the people of Omagh, offered thanks to the Army,

the RUC, the paramedics, the PM, even the press for their support and received approving murmurs. Congratulatory and appreciative little hugs flew across the chamber floor towards the PM, from Hague and Ashdown and Hume – though cracks had started to appear.

What was that line in Mr Blair’s introduction, about how “Our basic aim is to make it easier to achieve convictions”? As if getting a result was a stronger impulse than justice? What were the tiny guffaws that greeted his refusal to be drawn by Tony Bann into historical perspectives? “We must learn from history, but we mustn’t be mesmerised by it, or live in it.” I think you’ll find, Tony (they seemed to say) that it’s hard to live anywhere else.

Suddenly, in every congratulatory

THE SKETCH



JOHN WALSH

ing voice, a grievance seemed to be sneaking in. Why, if the Irish government had kept interment on its statutes, didn’t we bring it back?

David Trimble began with another “May-I-endorse-everything-that’s-been-said”, but then veered sharply left into questions of de-commissioning. Tam Dalyell spotted

a tangent to the main discussion (whether Article 51 encourages the bombing of Arab countries you don’t like) and shambled off down it.

Damn and blast it, the PM’s face seemed to say. You hope for unity of purpose, you’d settle for a show of understanding, and you get a lot of egoists refusing to play ball. All his smooth replies about “splinter groups with no support”, and “measures taken by two countries working together”, sounded more to do with party politics than with Ulster. Come on, guys.

Then the balloon went up. As the Speaker called for the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to read the Bill, Richard Shepherd (Con, Aldridge-Brownhills) launched into a spectacular, passionate denunciation of the way the whole event had been

stage-managed. “What I detest is what this country will come to detest,” he thundered. “All I knew about what was in this Bill, before six o’clock last night, was through spokesmen, through spin and press release.” The spittle-flecked emphases were toxic with disgust, as he grew slightly incoherent.

“Has the purpose of this House changed? Should we abandon the freedom to discuss? It has almost become a House of Acceptance... This is no way for the House to do its business.”

He continued for 10 minutes like this, his voice cracking and wobbling under the strain, but the burden of his song was clear: he objected to being rushed to judgement, without time to think, to consult, to suggest amendments or talk

to the Lords. He’d had enough of New Labour Bill Management.

Then Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe and Nantwich) joined in, supporting the splendid Shepherd like a nice Dickensian daughter. “I think the House of Commons should give itself time to think... We are not the repository of all wisdom. What we may think targeted and precise may be imprecise, vague and not worthy of a proper assembly.”

And blow me down if Ian Paisley didn’t rise up in awful majesty to agree with her. And then, *mirabile dictu*, so did Tony Bann. “I rise to agree with the last three speakers,” he said coolly, “a most unusual combination.” So the PM did achieve a level of unity between warring factions after all – but only in disparagement of his methods.

Defiant MPs ignore whips on terror Bill

THE GOVERNMENT’S attempts to push through its emergency anti-terror legislation were marred last night by a rebellion of MPs furious that Parliament had been given little time to consider the measures.

Sixteen backbenchers defied the whips to vote against a procedural motion to cut short the debate on the Bill to tackle terrorism at home and abroad. Among the rebels were Tony Benn, Chris Mullin, Jeremy Corbyn, Gwyneth Dunwoody and Tam Dalyell. They were joined by 19 Liberal Democrats and 39 Tories, including the former prime minister Sir Edward Heath.

The exchanges followed a pledge by the Prime Minister that those responsible for the Omagh atrocity would not be allowed to wreck the peace process. It was “an indiscriminate attack on a whole community” and an attempt to ruin the Good Friday Agreement.

Speaking before the full debate on the Bill, Tony Blair said he had recalled Parliament precisely to implement measures to ensure Omagh was the last outrage of its kind.

The Criminal Justice (Terrorism and Conspiracy) Bill will make it easier to convict members of proscribed terrorist organisations such as the Real IRA, which claimed responsibility for the massacre.

The Bill makes admissible in court the opinion of a senior po-

TERRORISM BILL

BY PAUL WAUGH
AND SARAH SCHAEFER

lice officer that an individual is a member of such groups, allows suspects’ failure to answer questions to be taken into account and gives police the power to seize their property.

In an attempt to root out those who plan attacks such as the bombing of the US embassies in East Africa, it will also outlaw groups that conspire to commit offences abroad. Mr Blair said he understood the civil liberties concerns of some backbenchers but the measures were a “proportionate and targeted response” to deal with small and evil groups that commanded no public support.

“The aim of the bombers was not just to kill innocent people but was to strike at the heart of the peace process. Further political progress is by far the best answer to violence. We will not forget the horror of Omagh. But I say this to the bombers: You sought to wreck the agreement, and you failed. You sought to divide the community, and you failed. You sought to win new support, and you failed. You failed because violence and terror represent the past in Northern Ireland and democracy and peace represent the future.”

Mr Blair also welcomed the decision by the First Minister

of Northern Ireland, David Trimble, and the Deputy First Minister, Seamus Mallon, to call a meeting of all leaders of political parties next week.

William Hague, Leader of the Opposition, said Omagh had proved it was a mistake for the Government to remove the power of internment last autumn.

Paddy Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democrats, said he would not allow the “blood and atrocities of Omagh” to destroy the 25-year cross-party unity on Northern Ireland but he had “deep regret” that it included matters that had nothing to do with the Province.

Mr Trimble welcomed the Bill, but said the bombing had underlined the need for all terror groups to begin handing over their guns and bombs. If the measures proved ineffective, and another atrocity was committed, it would be “embarrassing” if the Irish government rushed to intern suspects without the RUC having similar powers at its disposal. Mr Blair said: “I rule nothing out for the future. My judgement is that this is not the right move now.” William Thompson, Ulster Unionist MP for Tyrone West, in whose constituency Omagh lies, said no one would forget the killings and everyone in Northern Ireland wanted them to be the last. “Bombs are indiscriminate. They kill Protestants, Roman



Alistair Darling, Secretary of State for Social Security (right), leading a group of MPs into the Commons yesterday

Rui Xavier

Catholics, Mormons, all types of people. They kill children, mothers, grandmothers, sons and daughters and there are many people who mourn the loss of a loved one.” Mr Mullin, MP for Sunderland South and chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee, said criticism of the Bill would “melt like snow on a volcano” if the Government would require the RUC to audiotape its interviews with suspects and allow the presence of a solicitor.

“If you get this wrong, you shall end up creating a political base for a tiny, isolated sect that at the moment has no political base. That’s what happened in the past and we must avoid that in the future.”

Tony Benn, MP for Chesterfield, attacked the Government’s decision to support the American missile strikes on Sudan and Afghanistan and said the action contravened international law.

However, Mr Blair said the

US had strong evidence to support its claim that the factory in Sudan was developing chemical weapons. He said it was important to prevent Britain from becoming a “haven” for international terrorists or their supporters.

Opening the Second Reading debate, Jack Straw, Home Secretary, said the timing of Parliament’s recall had been prompted by the parallel tragedies of Omagh and East Africa. “We believe it is essen-

tial to act without delay... the recall today illustrates graphically that cross-border co-operation at a political level has never been better, and that is equally true operationally... the clear and unequivocal message is that co-operation is vital at all levels between the North and the South in the fight against terrorism.”

During an earlier debate on the proceedings of the Bill, MPs from all parties expressed anger at the speed with which

the legislation was being pushed through Parliament and demanded that the clauses on the prevention of international terrorism be delayed to a later date.

The Liberal Democrat Chief Whip, Paul Tyler, withdrew his support for the guillotine motion and urged the Government to drop the clauses dealing with international terrorism. The matter was forced to a vote, which the Government won by 317 to 88.

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APRAs correct as at 24th August 1998. Sources: Moneyfacts.

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Ahern promises crackdown in Republic will lapse in two years

IRELAND’S TOUGH new anti-terrorist laws will lapse at the end of 2000, the Dail was told yesterday as it approved wide-ranging measures to counter the threat of the Real IRA.

Dublin also dropped an earlier proposal that a court should be able to draw inferences from a suspect’s silence during questioning where a person is being accused of membership of a proscribed organisation. But such inferences may still be drawn in prosecution of other listed terrorist offences.

Opposition parties sought further safeguards against possible misuse of the new legislation, including video taping of interviews, before the Dail voted late last night.

The coalition government accepted that a suspect must be produced in court before a new 24-hour extension of the current

IRISH TERRORISM BILL

BY ALAN MURDOCH
in Dublin

maximum 48 hours’ detention for questioning can be approved.

The Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, promised the new measures “will lapse once we can be sure they are no longer necessary”. The new provisions include confiscation of land and property used in terrorist operations, and making it an offence to direct an illegal organisation, unlawfully collect security information, or possess items connected with weapons and explosives offences.

Land confiscation is intended to deter those, including farmers, on the fringes of republican groups who provided vital support by storing arms and explosives.

The opposition Fine Gael



Ahern: Tough measures

leader, John Bruton, warned that Tuesday’s statement by the Sinn Féin leader, Gerry Adams, saying violence “must be a thing of the past” was only a wish, “not a statement of what the IRA will actually do”.

He said the IRA, by ruling out decommissioning, had indicated its intention “to maintain its military capacity indefinitely”.

Mr Bruton alleged that a Provisional IRA statement in April which sought “the luxury of an easy way out on the Good Friday Agreement” had created political space for the Real IRA to “claim a spurious sense of republican justification for bombing campaigns”.

He warned that new, violent splinter groups could be spawned by the gap between Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin positions.

The Labour leader, Ruairi Quinn, said Ireland and Britain had a moral responsibility to defend democracy with effective measures against the “fanatical and violent thugs behind the mass murder in Omagh” who were intent on wrecking the peace process.

The Democratic Left (DL) leader, Pádraig Kirby, said Dublin should show soli-

arity with Omagh by sharing the costs of repairing the damage. DL sought publication every three months of lists of people held under the new laws, saying extra Garda powers should be conditional on the setting up of the Human Rights Commission promised in the Good Friday Agreement.

Only Sinn Féin’s sole TD (MP), Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, and the independent socialist, Joe Higgins, voted against the measures. Mr Ó Caoláin said “a return to a failed repressive agenda would run completely contrary to the Good Friday Agreement”. Mr Higgins warned the changes held “major implications” for civil rights.

The house observed a minute’s silence in memory of the victims of the Omagh bomb and the Ballymoney fire.

Police pay £10m in damages deal

FOUR MEN who accused the police of malicious prosecution have received £10.6m damages and costs in the most expensive case brought against a force.

The four businessmen claimed that Greater Manchester Police deliberately tried to prosecute them for fraud as a means of discrediting John Stalker, the former deputy chief constable of the force. Mr Stalker, a friend of one of the businessmen, had been conducting an inquiry into allegations of a police “shoot-to-

SELECT COMMITTEE

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

kill” policy in Ulster, but as a result of the allegations he was removed from the inquiry.

A committee of MPs yesterday highlighted the “enormous” pay-out to the four men, which until today had a gagging clause imposed on it, and called for greater openness in cases.

The Commons Home Affairs Select Committee criticised the police for unnecessary secrecy in hiding the amounts of their

increasingly common civil claims for damages. It recommended that, in future, cases should only remain “gagged” under exceptional circumstances and that “disclosure becomes the standard practice”.

The Home Office and police chiefs will now consider the recommendations.

The Stalker case was given as an example of the secrecy used by the police in many civil settlements, including pay-outs in cases involving sexual harassment allegations.

The civil action involved

Kevin Taylor, a property developer of Baxenden, Lancashire, who was prosecuted in 1990 for allegedly defrauding the Co-operative Bank of £200,000. The case collapsed amid claims that the police had fabricated evidence. Mr Taylor, who came under investigation by a unit set up by the then Chief Constable, Sir James Anderton, claimed there had been a high-level conspiracy to have his friend Mr Stalker removed from the Ulster inquiry. The police have always denied there was any such conspiracy.

Mr Taylor, whose business had collapsed, settled a civil claim in 1995, but the details were kept secret. He is believed to have received more than £2m in damages, although police denied liability.

Three of Mr Taylor’s colleagues, Derek Britton, an accountant, Vincent McCann, a quantity surveyor, and Terence Bowley, a former bank manager, also claimed damages for malicious prosecution.

Two of the cases are still ongoing and the £10.6m cost is expected to rise significantly.

Watchdog
upholds
criticism
of CSA

0181 680 9966

Watchdog upholds criticism of CSA

ALMOST EVERY complaint about the work of the Child Support Agency was upheld after detailed investigation by the agency's regulator, it was revealed yesterday.

In her first annual report Anne Parker, the independent case examiner, gave the agency a three-year timetable to get its act together and said parents had been "frustrated, sometimes grossly inconvenienced and in some cases suffered actual financial loss" because of the CSA's maladministration.

Delay in processing cases has been "endemic", she said, adding that the agency had been largely unresponsive to customers' complaints. About two thirds of complaints were from men.

The regulator - who is responsible for investigating a small proportion of around 28,000 complaints made against the CSA last year - received 1,087 complaints in her first year. Of the 150 she investigated in detail, 93 per cent were fully or partially upheld.

The pattern was of delays at all stages, poor communications, poor complaints handling, problems in obtaining maintenance from the self-employed and arrears in maintenance.

In one case, the agency had to pay more than £18,000 compensation to a woman after it incorrectly believed it had jurisdiction in her case and cancelled her court order in 1995. The court order was reinstated in 1997 but the CSA had obtained no payment in the interim.

The agency came into operation in 1993 to assess child maintenance and enforce collection. But it has been dogged with problems. A report from the National Audit Office last month

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

showed that one quarter of all CSA estimates were wrong and the errors cost children £15.8m a year in missed contributions. That was followed by news that more than 1,200 staff - out of 8,000 - had left the agency in five months as morale plummeted.

Last July the Government announced a wide-ranging shake-up of the CSA, designed to improve its efficiency record. Under these plans, the agency will introduce a much simpler formula for assessing the liability of absent parents to pay child maintenance.

Looking at those who complained about lack of communication from the agency, Ms Parker found more than 40 per cent said the agency had failed to respond when parents tried to contact it or it had failed to supply information when requested.

While acknowledging that there had been some improvement, Ms Parker said the complaints she saw represented "only the tip of the iceberg". She wanted to see "real measurable changes" in performance in the next three years.

Mike Isaac, deputy chief executive of the CSA, welcomed the report yesterday. "The independent case examiner has rightly identified areas where the agency's procedures and performance have merited criticism," he said.

"We are acutely aware of the sensitive nature of our work and the importance of getting it right first time. Poor complaints handling on top of poor case handling is totally unacceptable, and we regret the difficulties we have caused to the customers affected."



Friends of the Earth protesting yesterday at the sale by Lord De Ramsey, head of the Environment Agency, of land used to test genetically modified crops David Rose

Polluters 'should face bigger fines'

FINES FOR companies polluting the environment are still far too low, the head of the Environment Agency said yesterday. Penalties of a few thousand pounds are no deterrent to multimillion-pound companies, said Ed Gallagher, the agency's chief executive, who said the "going rate" for fines for chemical pollutants averages about £2,000 per tonne of pollution.

He told the agency's annual meeting in London 600 pollution-related cases were taken to court by the agency in 1997-98, a 16 per cent increase, but their impact was undermined by the lack of really serious penalties.

"Whether they be a multinational company or just an unscrupulous individual, last year's enforcement record clearly shows the agency will not tolerate any polluters. However, this tough approach ... needs to be matched by the

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY
Environment Correspondent

courts."

The biggest fine in a pollution case brought by the agency was £300,000 imposed on ICI in March for polluting ground water with chloroform at a plant at Runcorn, Cheshire.

Other fines for serious offences are much lower. Wessex Water polluted the marina at Weymouth, Dorset, with 1 million gallons of sewage on Bank Holiday Monday last year.

Pleading guilty when prosecuted in May, the company - profits last year £130m - was ordered to pay £5,250 in fines and costs. British Nuclear Fuels was fined £20,000 for discharging more than twice the permitted amount of chemicals into a river at Preston, Lancashire.



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Daimler-Benz has developed the first-ever fuel cell car to use methanol as the fuel. Based on the Mercedes A-class, the revolutionary new vehicle represents a decisive breakthrough in the quest to develop a drive system with extremely low emissions.

The car, known as NECAR3 (New Electric Car), fills up with liquid methanol. With the aid of a reformer system located in the rear of the vehicle, the methanol is converted on-line into hydrogen through water-vapour reformation. The hydrogen gas is then fed into the fuel cells where it is combined with atmospheric oxygen - but without combustion - to directly produce electrical energy used to power the vehicle.

Previous fuel cell systems could only operate in conjunction with bulky hydrogen tanks for fuel storage. With NECAR3, the entire process is much more direct: press the accelerator pedal and an astonishing 90 percent of the system's power is available in just two seconds. In terms of driving dynamics, this puts fuel cell vehicles using methanol on a par with conventional petrol or diesel-

powered cars.

Dispensing with the hydrogen tanks not only reduces vehicle weight, but it also greatly improves the everyday practicality of the new vehicle: petrol stations can theoretically handle methanol, which doesn't require special safety measures, nearly as easily as petrol or diesel. What's more, NECAR3 has a range of some 250 miles on a tank of 8.7 gallons of methanol - similar to conventional vehicles.

Daimler-Benz decided to opt for methanol because it is the most suitable fuel for hydrogen generation. Although petrol and diesel were also considered, the efficiency levels of these fuels would have been lower. For the introductory phase of fuel-cell powered vehicles at least, engineers are considering the possibility of a multi-fuel concept which, as the name suggests, would permit the use of different types of fuel until methanol is widely available.

The drive system of NECAR3 is virtually emission-free. Neither nitrogen oxides nor soot particles are created during conversion of methanol to hydrogen or in the subsequent

generation of electrical energy. And thanks to the extreme efficiency of the fuel cells, carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions are substantially below those of conventional cars.

With the advent of onboard hydrogen generation, a crucial step has been taken towards developing the environmentally friendly fuel cell technology that could eventually power vehicles of the future. An equally important milestone on the road to this lofty goal is the incorporation of the entire system into the 3.57 m long A-class. Once again, the innovative double-floor sandwich concept employed in the A-class has proved its worth, allowing the complete installation of the fuel cells and several auxiliary units underneath the passenger cell. The methanol fuel tank, reformer and control system are located in the rear of the car.

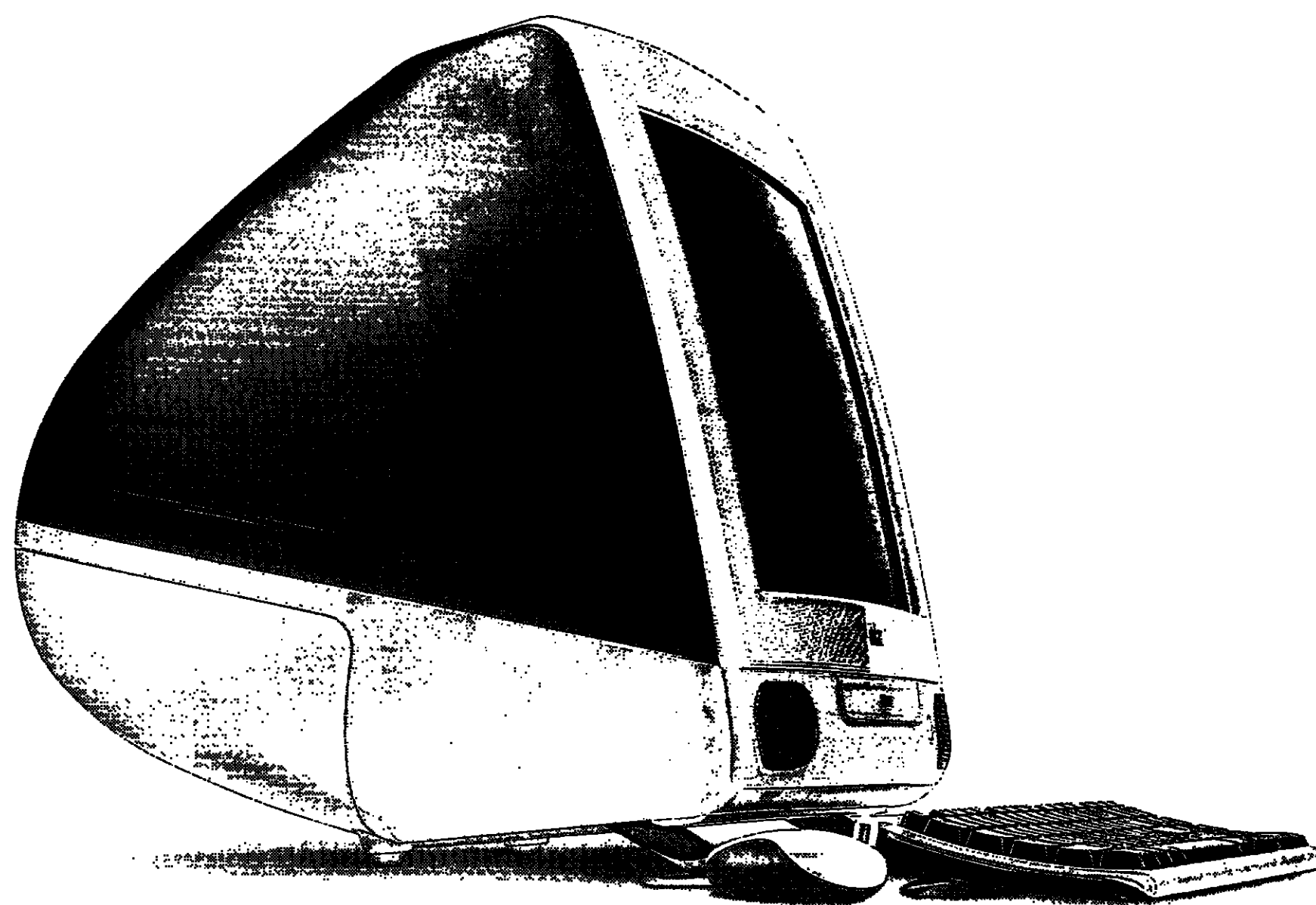
The methanol reformer technology in NECAR3 has benefited from a wide range of technological advances at Daimler-Benz. Not only has the system been made smaller and more efficient, but the performance and dynamic response of the reformation

process have also been improved. The result is a compact unit of some 18 inches in height. Located in the rear of the A-class, the reformer directly injects hydrogen into the fuel cells. Hydrogen production occurs at a temperature of 280° centigrade: methanol and water vaporize to give hydrogen (H2), carbon dioxide (CO2), and carbon monoxide (CO).

The hydrogen protons travel through the polymer membrane while the electrons travel through an external circuit to arrive at the positive electrode. There, the oxygen, hydrogen protons and electrons combine to form water. An electric motor attached to the external circuit is then used to drive the vehicle.

Fuel cell cars represent one facet of the wealth of research and development being carried out by Daimler-Benz into the way that cars and other forms of transport can be improved for the future. If these advances continue with the same speed as they do currently, we could be driving fuel cell cars by 2004. For more information, contact the Mercedes-Benz website at www.mercedes-benz.co.uk

Say hello to iMac.



You're invited to celebrate the UK debut of iMac.™ On September 5th, at a nearby Apple reseller, you'll be able to get your hands on the computer that's the essence of speed and simplicity. iMac is easy to buy (no extra decisions). Easy to set up (just add electricity). And easy to use (one click and hello, internet). So mark your diary: September 5th.

Be among the first in the UK to say goodbye to complicated computers and hello to iMac.

iMac arrives September 5th.

Say hello at your nearest Apple reseller detailed on
the following page.



Apple Reseller.

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Apple Reseller

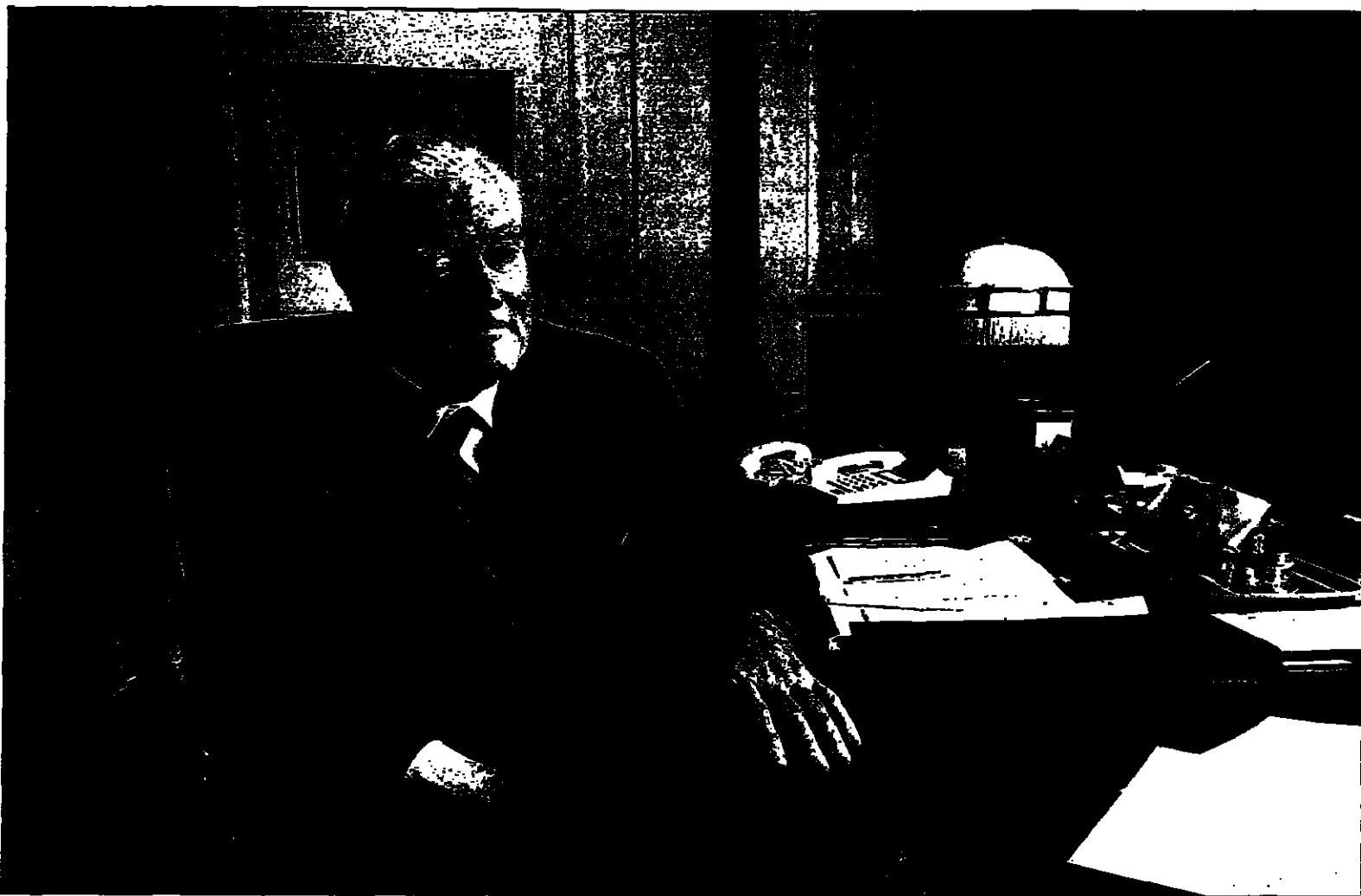
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F H Brown Plc	Barnsley	01226 777110
The Chicago Computer Company Limited	Bedford	01234 826660
Mac & More UK Ltd*	Berkhamstead	01442 870300
SRI (Computing)	Bowling, Glasgow	01389 877855
Hi-Tec Computer Services	Bradford	01274 771888
Computer Warehouse	Brentford	0181 4001234
Network Professional Ltd	Brighton	01273 748083
Robert Harding Computers Ltd	Brighton	01273 608444
John Lewis	Bristol	0117 9591100
Apple Tree Graphics	Bromsgrove	01527 570535
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ProNet Computer Systems	Cambridge	01223 462266
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Datacore Consultants	Chelmsford	01245 261578
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John Lewis	Edinburgh	0131 5569121
Scotsys Computer Systems	Edinburgh	0845 6062641
Carpe Diem Solutions Limited	Glasgow	0141 3339901
Scotsys Computer Systems	Glasgow	0845 6062641
The Mac Zone	Guildford	0800 393696
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Solutions Inc	Hove	01273 889020
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PCM Technologies Limited	London E15	0181 5194497
Colyer Graphics Ltd	London EC1R	0171 8330888
Camelot	London NW1	0171 3832727
SRS Systems Ltd	London NW10	0181 9648111
John Lewis	London NW4	0181 2026535
Mygate Limited	London SE12	0800 0187558
Peter Jones	London SW1W	0171 7303434
Apple at Harrods	London SW1X	0171 7301234
Tasha Computers Ltd	London W14	0171 6029444
John Lewis	London W1A	0171 6297711
Albion Computers Plc	London W1N	0171 3230220
Future Intuitive	London W1N	0701 0702250
Micro Anvil**	London WC1	0171 6362547
Advanced Graphic Communications	London W2	0171 2216036
Vonian Graphic Systems Limited	Manchester	0161 2743797
John Lewis	Milton Keynes	01908 679171
Orchard Computing	Milton Keynes	01908 640313
ABC Microcore Limited	Newcastle upon Tyne	0191 268 1162
Bainbridge	Newcastle upon Tyne	0191 2325000
Island Computer Systems	Newport, Isle of Wight	01983 821717
Bonds	Norwich	01603 660021
ExMicro Ltd	Nottingham	0115 9455077
Jessops	Nottingham	0115 9418282
Jigsaw Systems Ltd	Nottingham	0115 9422990
KRCS AppleCentre Nottingham	Nottingham	0115 950352
ME Electronics Ltd	Oxford	01865 728700
Oxford Macintosh Solutions	Oxford	01865 882504
John Lewis	Peterborough	01733 344644
The Mac Express	Peter Wood, Kent	0181 4625626
Bidmuthin Technologies Ltd	Pinner, Middlesex	0181 8684400
P A Business Services	Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire	01253 881800
Holdens Computer Services Ltd	Preston	01772 610100
Heelas	Reading	01189 575955
Thames Valley Systems	Reading	01189 503500
EuroMac	Ramford	01708 479898
Cole Brothers	Sheffield	0114 2768511
Trimac Technology Limited	Sheffield	0114 2724127
Sidwell Technology	Solihull	01564 775775
Tyrell & Green	Southampton	01703 227711
Guernsey Computers Limited	St Peter Port, Guernsey	01481 728738
Milton Computer Systems	Swindon	01793 513685
Tavy Typesetting Ltd	Tavistock	01822 615007
Kinetix Ltd	Telford	01952 246111
Marton Associates	Telford	01952 261802
AT Computers	Tewkesbury	01684 291112
Computer Initiative	Truro	01872 223100
MacAce Sales Ltd	Wadebridge, North Cornwall	01208 812153
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Trewins	Watford	01923 244266
John Lewis	Welwyn Garden City	01707 323456

* Mac & More will be open from 1 min past midnight on 5th September.
** Micro Anvil, 245 Tottenham Court Road will be open from 1 min past midnight until 3:00 am on 5th September.
The above does not constitute a full listing of Apple Resellers.

Apple Reseller.

Rothermere, last of the press barons, dies



Lord Rothermere's control of Associated Newspapers led to the resurgence of the 'Daily Mail' and a huge rise in profits Keith Dobney

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

LORD ROTHERMERE, chairman of Associated Newspapers and scion of the last great press dynasty, died of a heart attack in London late on Monday at the age of 73, just three months after the death of Sir David English, editor-in-chief of Associated's *Daily Mail*, *Mail on Sunday* and *Evening Standard*.

The newspaper group is now in the hands of 30-year-old Jonathan Harmsworth, Rothermere's son.

Vere Harold Esmond Harmsworth, third Viscount Rothermere, was the great nephew of Lord Northcliffe, founder of the dynasty and the model for press barons to come.

Yesterday the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, led the tributes for a man whose newspapers had long supported the Conservative Party.

"He was an extraordinary man and underneath that very bluff exterior was a sharp mind and a very kind personality."

The death of Rothermere so close to that of English robs the company of two towering figures. Editorially, it leaves Paul Dacre, English's successor, in an unassailable position. It is known he believes the *Evening Standard*, the title he edited before the *Daily Mail*, is weak under editor Max Hastings and he may want to make changes to the *Mail on Sunday*. Mr Dacre may also promote someone to the editorship of the *Daily Mail* to allow him to focus more on group activities.

His relationship with the new Lord Rothermere will be crucial. Where Vere Harmsworth always wanted to be a journalist, Jonathan has concentrated on the business side of newspapers.

He trained at Mirror Group before moving to the *Daily Mail* and General Trust's (DMGT) regional newspapers. Until his father's death he was managing



Lord Rothermere's first wife Patricia, known as 'Bubbles' (left), and with his second wife, Maiko. His son, Jonathan Harmsworth, (below), has taken the reins of his father's newspaper empire Nicky English/Rebecca Naden



with high standards of tabloid journalism and an unimpaired set of middle-class values.

The *Mail* was conservative both politically and morally, banking for an era before the Sixties when patriotism was blind, divorce shameful and hard work the only way up for the socially aspirational.

The formula worked and in 1977 the dominant *Daily Express* too became tabloid. By the mid-Eighties the *Mail* had

overtaken its rival. In 1982, Rothermere decided to launch the *Mail on Sunday*.

While most tabloid newspapers are in decline the *Mail* is selling more than 2.3 million copies a day, a million more than the *Express* and close to overtaking the *Mirror*.

When Rothermere took over Associated Newspapers its profits were £3.7m and turnover was £58.5m a year. The DMGT last year made profits of £81m on turnover of £658m. Jonathan Harmsworth inherits 75 per cent of the company.

Rothermere's private life was a long way from the values of his flagship newspaper.

The ruddy-faced old Etonian enjoyed the life of a bon vivant and lived in Paris for years with his long-term partner, the former model Maiko Lee. His wife, Patricia, "Bubbles" Rothermere, lived the life of a socialite in London. Rothermere married Ms Lee in 1993 shortly after Bubbles died.

Despite his newspapers' politics Rothermere was a Europeanophile who befriended Tony Blair when he was in opposi-

tion. He moved onto the Labour benches in the House of Lords after Labour's election win.

Mr Dacre said of Lord Rothermere: "He was that rare mix of a brilliant businessman who understood newspapers, He loved journalism and journalists and we who care for the written word were all privileged to work for him."

Lady Thatcher said: "He was one of the great figures in the British newspaper industry this century, and his papers reflected a strong sense of Britain's values and traditions."

Simon Knefer, editor of *The Independent*, said: "As a newspaper proprietor who believed above all in empowering his journalists and investing in editorial talent Lord Rothermere was a rare and singular creature. His passing should be mourned by journalists everywhere."

Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, described Lord Rothermere's death as a "tremendous loss for the media industry."

Obituary, *Review*, page 6

Banks and building societies 'give loyal savers a raw deal'

BY GLENDA COOPER

BANKS AND building societies treat deposit-account savers "shabbily", using tactics that penalise existing customers while offering better deals to new investors, the Consumers' Association says today.

The association says banks are exploiting a loophole in the Banking Code to do this and urges customers to hit back by moving their money to rival savings accounts.

According to the association, many people tuck away their savings in the same account for years, presuming that their financial institution will reward their loyalty with a competitive interest rate. But often banks and building societies fail to inform existing customers about new and better deals, so

savers' money stays in accounts with inferior interest rates.

And while new customers are attracted by high rates, they may find that the deals soon become less competitive. Although institutions advertise rate changes in newspapers, under the Banking Code they do not have to say how big the change is or even whether they have cut rates or put them up.

The code obliges institutions to tell savers with money in obsolete accounts - that is accounts closed to new customers but still operated for existing savers - about the rates on all their accounts every year. But many institutions choose to keep accounts

live, without promoting them, rather than making them obsolete. This way they do not have to tell savers about products they are offering to new savers.

The Consumers' Association's *Which?* magazine looked at 36 banks and building societies over the past three years. It found that half the high street institutions used this practice to some degree. Building societies tended to be better than banks.

When Alliance & Leicester launched its account Prime 90 in 1996 it paid high rates but within a few months its rates fell below its competitors. Then, in April 1997, Alliance & Leicester launched Platinum Plus. This was similar to Prime 90 but paid an annual bonus of 0.5 per cent if you made no withdrawals. Al-

liance & Leicester did not write to Prime 90 customers about the new account even though if you moved £10,000 from Prime 90 to Platinum Plus you would earn an extra £106 interest per year.

In another case, Northern Rock introduced Branch Select Instant (BSI) in February 1998 paying between 6.85 and 7.5 per cent interest depending on the balance in the account. At the time, its existing Instant Access account paid 0.5 - 3.1 per cent. BSI also pays better rates than Northern Rock's four branch-based notice accounts even though having to give notice to withdraw money normally involves a better rate.

Other offenders included Leeds & Holbeck, Woolwich, Bank of Scotland, NatWest, the

Royal Bank of Scotland and TSB.

A spokesman for Northern Rock said yesterday: "We believe our savings pledge introduced in March addresses the issue and puts us at the forefront of best practice." A spokeswoman for Alliance & Leicester said the institution had made changes in the way it communicated with customers since the research was carried out.

Helen Parker, editor of *Which?* said: "Thanks to our lobbying, the Banking Code is now being tightened up... However, our advice is that if you are unhappy with your bank or building society for keeping details of better accounts from you, switch institutions rather than save with one that has treated you so poorly."

Tycoon attacks Yeltsin's 'weakness'

BILL CLINTON had barely finished spelling out his message of capitalism, peace and the laws of global economics in Moscow yesterday before Russia was in the grips of new political conflict.

The tycoon who orchestrated the firing of the last government, Boris Yeltsin, abruptly turned on President Boris Yeltsin and his prime minister-to-be, Viktor Chernomyrdin, accusing them of weakness because they have been willing to bargain with parliament.

BY PHIL REEVES
in Moscow

His move further isolates the acting prime minister, whose nomination was overwhelmingly rejected by parliament this week, but whom Mr Yeltsin has continued to support, prompting speculation that the legislature will be dissolved later this month.

The oligarch - one of a handful of businessmen whose wealth and holdings allows them to wield great political influence - yesterday seemed to

realign his loyalties to two powerful political figures: the mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, and General Alexander Lebed, who has presidential aspirations.

Both these men are viewed askance in the West. The mayor, in particular, has shown few democratic impulses and is an outspoken nationalist. Mr Lebed's switch of allegiance came after a day in which Mr Clinton and his team had repeatedly appealed to Russia to keep on the path towards a market economy, hold-

ing out the lure of unspecified Western assistance.

The American message, delivered yesterday by President Clinton in person to parliamentary leaders - including the Communists' Gennady Zyuganov - was an unambiguous statement of support for Mr Yeltsin, but it appears to have done little to end the Russian leader's isolation.

The State Duma, or lower house, added to the tension by passing an almost unanimous vote calling for the firing of the chairman of the Central Bank,

Sergei Dubinin, who led a hopeless struggle to defend the ruble before devaluing last month, and defaulting on foreign debts.

The demands by the Duma, which has been trying to use the political crisis to wrest powers from the Kremlin, symbolised the failure of Mr Clinton and his entourage to impress their message on the opposition, or anyone other than the converted. Mr Dubinin is regarded as a firm disciple of market economics.

The political picture grew still more fractured last night when

Mr Yeltsin signed a decree re-appointing his foreign, defence, and interior ministers, along with Boris Fyodorov, a reformist deputy prime minister.

The decree suggests that Mr Yeltsin and Mr Chernomyrdin are pressing ahead with their plan to appoint a cabinet, even though this is a breach of the constitution.

The heightening of the political feud makes it still less likely that the State Duma will confirm Mr Chernomyrdin in his post at a second vote tomorrow, and further increases

the possibility that its stand-off with the Kremlin will end in parliament's dissolution.

The visit by the Clinton entourage to urge Russia not to revert to command economics has done little to allay concerns about Mr Yeltsin's capacity to govern, as he was several times caught by the cameras looking confused.

Mr Clinton repeated his call for Russia to stick to the path of reforms, no matter how painful. But the message was softer than the West's has been before, and placed greater emphasis on the need for a social safety net.

Although US officials have ruled out any new money for Russia, Mr Clinton has talked broadly about more aid if Russia follows the right course - as Mr Yeltsin has said it will - and suggested this might come from the World Bank.

The International Monetary Fund is already pressing Moscow hard to follow a tough, market-orientated austerity programme in return for the next \$4.3bn (£2.6bn) tranche of a \$23bn IMF-led rescue package.

Millionaire unable to buy a car after rouble crash

"SORRY, I can only take dollars from now on," Valya told Grisha when she came to collect the September rent. It was a heavy blow to him, because the devalued rouble buys far fewer dollars at exchange points, if indeed they are available.

Grisha, a professional musician, is in a particularly weak position as the crisis in Russia deepens. On an irregular income from the state concert agency, he must also pay rent for his accommodation because he has recently been divorced. He scrapes this together by giving private lessons for dollars but pupils often fail to show up and every month it is touch and go.

Old friendship counts for something in Russia but Grisha cannot expect charity from his landlady, who has her own back to the wall. An engineer, Valya lives beyond her paltry official means because she is fortunate to have inherited from her mother a second flat that she can rent out. Until now, she has been happy to take the equivalent of \$350 (£210) a month in any mixture of bank notes because the rouble has been stable and convertible inside the country. But now the two rooms out by the airport cost hard currency.

At the moment, Valya is only breaking the law by not paying tax on her extra income. And in a way, who can blame her? Even \$350, three times the average salary, is not very much when she has two children to feed, clothe and educate at current Moscow prices.

If Russia returns to Soviet-era currency controls, however, Valya will be committing a crime simply by holding dollars in her hand. The old-new-acting Prime

BY HELEN WOMACK
in Moscow

Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, promises that this is not going to happen but already a black market is flourishing.

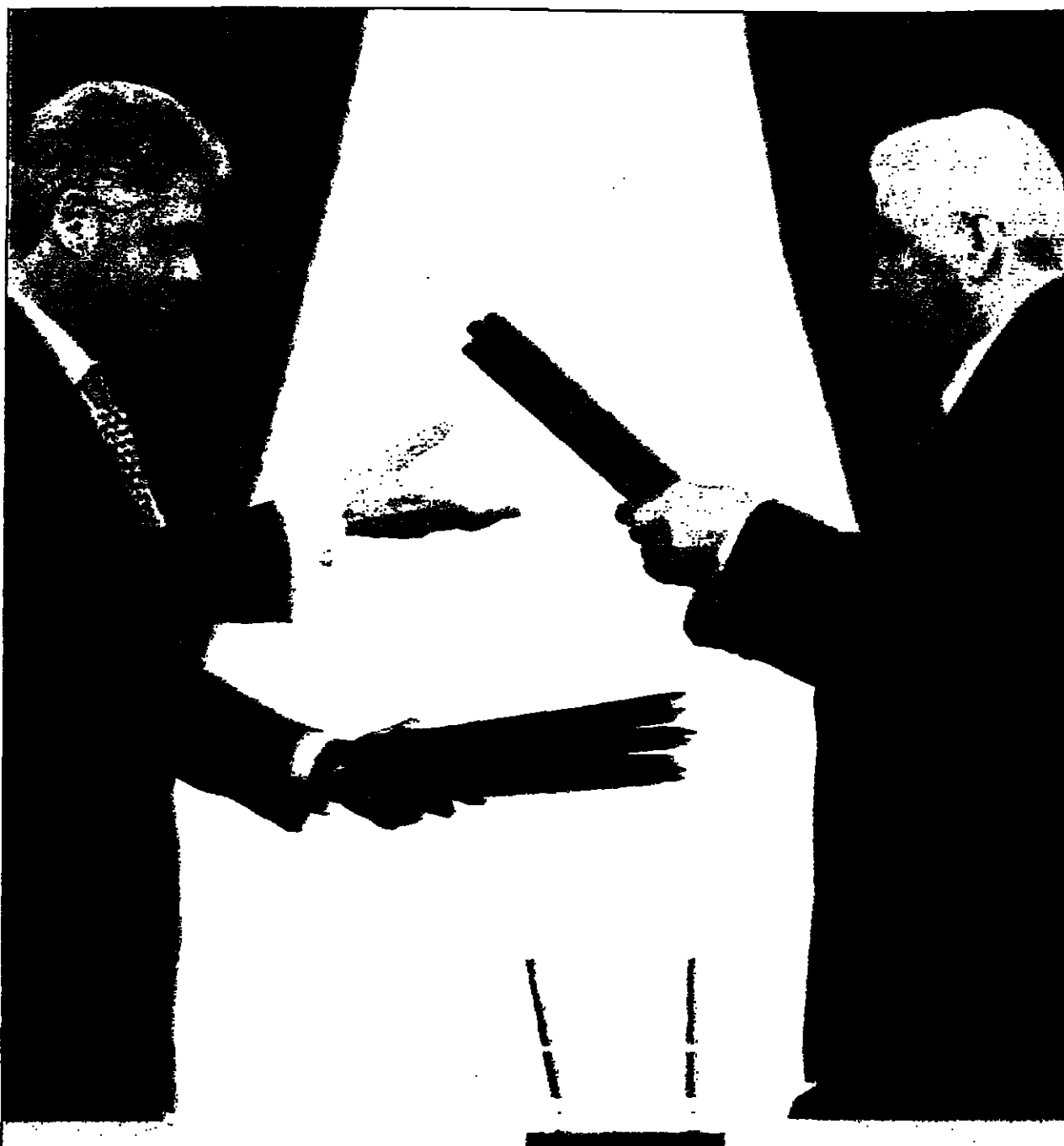
Low inflation and a stable rouble had been among the few tangible achievements of President Boris Yeltsin's administration. For months, the rouble traded reliably at around 6,000 to \$1, thanks to support from the Central Bank.

But on 17 August, the short-lived government of Sergei Kiriyenko widened the corridor in which the rouble could float before the bank intervened to a range of 6,000 to 9,000.

Exchange traders immediately made the ceiling of 9,000 their starting point. Political chaos after President Yeltsin back out of retirement caused the rouble to plunge further. Yesterday, the Central Bank had breached its own corridor and was offering an official rate of nearly 11,000 to the dollar. But the rate on the street varied from 13,000-1 in Moscow to 22,000-1 in the provinces.

Russians want the dollar because it is an inflation-proof currency in which to keep their money. But they cannot spend dollars in the stores, as new democratic laws say all goods must be available to foreigners and locals alike, priced in roubles. It was not always so.

The Communists operated a system of hard-currency supermarkets for foreigners, well-stocked rouble stores for privileged party members and other rouble shops with a miserable selection of tins and rot-



Presidents Clinton (left) and Yeltsin exchanging signed documents in the Kremlin yesterday J Scott Applewhite

ten vegetables for the majority of the population.

On one occasion, the late Soviet human rights campaigner, Andrei Sakharov, made a point by getting himself arrested trying to enter a hard-currency store with only roubles in his pocket. Most Russians avoided overt protests but took risks nevertheless by turning to the black market for such things as jeans.

Today, although imports are starting to dry up, there are still enough goods in Moscow. But prices are rocketing, forcing Russians to tighten their belts or work even harder to survive.

While I was writing this article, the phone rang. "Hi, it's Galina, I know we haven't seen each other for two years but do you by any chance need a masseuse?" She was hoping

that I, as a "rich" foreigner, could help boost her earnings. "Roubles will be fine, I'm not insisting on dollars," she said.

Yet strangely Slava, the mechanic who fixes my car, was charging old prices and could not be persuaded to take more. Clients were falling away and he was afraid he would go out of business if he demanded extra.

He had a bittersweet story to tell. All this year, he worked round the clock to earn 30 million roubles (previously \$6,000), which he planned to spend on his dream, a car of his own. Just before the devaluation, his wife persuaded him not to rush into the purchase.

Now a car is way beyond his reach. To the amusement of the whole garage, he has bought a double bed instead.

Presidential double act in art of evasion

BY THE standards of others who have sat in the Kremlin burdened by the knowledge that history will link their names with adultery - sorry, inappropriateness - President Bill Clinton is a minnow.

There have been plenty of them: Beria, Stalin's hated secret policeman, was ruthless and insatiable and even the dying Brezhnev had an affair (with a nurse, of course). But the unchallenged champion was Ivan the Terrible, who had seven wives and a covey of mistresses to whom he would turn whenever he felt the need for a breather from laying waste the countryside.

Yet, vile though he was, the tsar occupied higher moral ground in one sense. At least, he was good at atonement. When his conscience got too much for him, he set off barefoot on a pilgrimage to pray and fast in an Orthodox monastery, before returning to Moscow for more inappropriateness.

Mr Clinton looked subdued yesterday during his first encounter with the press since his prime-time admission over the Monica Lewinsky business, but he has still not mastered the art of penance.

"I have actually been quite heartened by the reaction of the American people and leaders throughout the world about it," he said, after the first Monica question from the White House press corps, who have not been diverted from the subject by trifles such as a sinking Russia and global recession.

To give him his due, Mr Clinton did try: "You know, I have acknowledged that I made a mistake, and said I regretted it, and asked for forgiveness, and spent a lot of very valuable time with my family in the last couple of weeks."

You would think it was bad

BY PHIL REEVES

enough for the leader of the world to sit next to a Russian president, whose society is still shattered by the Cold War defeat that his country secured, and be compelled to air his private sins, but they wanted more. They wanted a word that this litigious minded president can never give: Sorry.

Do you - he was asked - feel that after all the disappointment over "the broadcast" "you need to offer an apology, and do you have any feeling that the tone of your speech didn't quite convey the feelings you had?"

Even in his reply, Mr Clinton could not quite bring himself to use the a-word. "I thought it was clear I was expressing my profound regret to all that were hurt and to all who were involved and my desire not to see any more people hurt by this process and caught up in it," he said, before reverting to the old tactic of attacking the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, by pointing out that "most reasonable people would think [the affair] had consumed a disproportionate amount of America's time and money and resources".

Bill Clinton should have taken a leaf out of his host's book. Mr Yeltsin was only asked one tough question: would he be prepared to dissolve parliament if it refused to confirm his choice of prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin? But he clearly forgot what it was. "Well, I must say, that there will be a reasonable number of events taking place in order for us to be able to obtain these goals. ... What?" he replied opaquely.

Mr Clinton was terribly impressed: "That would have been my answer too! That was pretty good!"

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Willy Claes arriving for the start of the political corruption trial in Brussels yesterday. Daniel Williams/EPA

Belgium graft trial provokes soul-searching

BILLED AS the trial of the century and a symbol of the Belgian public's contempt for its politicians, the country's biggest corruption case in recent memory reached court yesterday amid a media scrum.

Those called to answer charges in the Palais de Justice in Brussels included Willy Claes, the country's former deputy prime minister and economic affairs minister who was forced to resign prematurely as Nato secretary-general in 1995.

In a country rocked by the mishandling of the Dutroux paedophile scandal, the trial, with its allegations of multi-million pound bribery at the heart of government, has assumed an almost cathartic importance. And it is likely to damage further the image of the governing coalition of Socialists and Christian Democrats, led by Jean-Luc Dehaene, ahead of next year's Belgian elections.

The allegations, which date back a decade, relate to cash offered to Belgium's French and Flemish-speaking Socialist parties as inducements to win lucrative military contracts. The first, with the Italian company Agusta, was for the supply of 46 helicopters to the Belgian armed forces. The second involves the French company Dassault Aviation, which won a contract in 1989 to modernise the country's fighter planes.

Both firms, it later emerged, had made private payments to Belgium's French-speaking and Flemish-speaking Socialist parties. In doing so the companies may have implicated some of the most senior figures in the political establishment.

The 12 charged include Guy Coombe, former defence minister, and Guy Spitaels, former

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

head of the French-speaking Socialist Party. Mr Claes at first denied knowledge of any payments but later admitted attending a meeting at which deals were discussed.

A setback for the prosecution has been the untimely death of one of the accused, 72-year-old Raffaele Teti, the former boss of Agusta who was accused of "active corruption", a more serious charge than that faced by all but one of the other defendants. Extradited from Brazil to Belgium in 1996, Teti died of a heart attack 10 days ago.

In court yesterday his lawyer, Xavier Magnee, read a statement in defence of the deceased before declaring: "You have said goodbye to the world and mankind. You have already appeared before your judge."

The Socialist parties are alleged to have received more than £2m from the two companies. None of the accused benefited personally from the "gifts" and, at the time, contributions to political parties were legal. The prosecutor, Eliane Lickendael, concentrated her fire yesterday on Serge Dassault, against whom, she said, there were "serious converging clues" of corruption.

Few expect speedy results from the proceedings, which are expected to last months. But the case has provoked soul-searching among the Belgian political elite. In a front-page editorial *Le Soir* declared it a "unique opportunity for Belgian democracy". Despite the difficulties of the judicial process, the trial "could help restore confidence in institutions which lack it".

IN BRIEF

US embassy attack warning

KUWAITI AUTHORITIES have found a handwritten note aboard a commercial airliner warning of an attack tomorrow against the United States embassy in the Philippines. "The note was in English and it was found aboard Emirates flight 103 from Dubai to Kuwait on Tuesday," an interior ministry spokesman said yesterday.

Population explosion slows

THE WORLD population is growing at eighty million a year and will pass the six billion level next year, according to the United Nations Population Fund. But despite this increase, the actual rate of growth is gradually slowing.

Chinese dissidents' protest letter

MORE THAN 130 Chinese dissidents have signed an open letter protesting against the arrest of the labour activist Zhang Shanguang and demanding his release, the New York-based Human Rights in China group said yesterday.

Bosnian arrested for war crimes

GERMAN FEDERAL prosecutors have arrested a Bosnian man suspected of committing war crimes during the 1992-95 war in Bosnia. The man, 43, identified only as Djuradj K, was arrested in Munich on Tuesday.

Sect leader killed in Ibiza

THE FORMER leader of an apocalyptic sect was killed on the Spanish island of Ibiza by a man who once accused him of sexual abuse. The former sect member, 18, who has been arrested, cut Eduardo Gonzalez's throat on Tuesday after the two left an ice-cream shop near Gonzalez's house.

Mahathir's 'heir' sacked over crisis

IN A sign of his country's growing international isolation and the seriousness of its economic crisis, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, yesterday sacked his Finance Minister and one-time political heir, Anwar Ibrahim.

After months of rumours about his deteriorating relationship with Dr Mahathir and a series of defamatory pamphlets alleging a homosexual affair between Mr Anwar and his chauffeur, his dismissal was not unexpected. The curt announcement came after a week of increasingly dramatic measures intended to save the Malaysian economy which officially sank into recession last week.

"Anwar Ibrahim has been sacked from his posts as Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister effective 5.30pm," said the statement issued yesterday evening by Dr Mahathir's department. Three trucks of riot police were deployed outside the Prime Minister's home after the announcement, apparently to deter angry supporters of Mr Anwar.

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

The Finance Minister is just the latest casualty in an ongoing struggle between reform-minded free marketeers and those like Dr Mahathir who blame Malaysia's financial and economic problems on malevolent foreign speculators.

Last week the governor of the central bank and his deputy resigned in protest at Dr Mahathir's plans to see off speculators by fixing the value of the ringgit. Mr Anwar backed the bank's tight monetary policy. Yesterday, after Tuesday's announcement of controls on foreign exchange transactions, the currency was pegged at 3.8 ringgit to the dollar, a move which sent confusion through the financial markets.

Mr Anwar was regarded for years as Dr Mahathir's natural successor - a young and charismatic former student leader, commanding particular respect among Malaysia's Muslim majority. But a year ago came the Asian economic crisis, which sucked down the value of the ringgit and de-



Mahathir: Economic crash destroyed dreams

stroyed 72-year-old Dr Mahathir's dream of joining the ranks of the industrialised countries by 2020.

After years of economic growth, Malaysia suddenly found itself struggling to avoid the fate of its neighbours Thailand and Indonesia, which were both driven to seek humiliating rescue packages from the International Monetary Fund. The fall of Indonesia's President Suharto gave courage to opponents of Dr Mahathir who accused him of corruption and

nepotism, and many regarded Mr Anwar as their figurehead. The Prime Minister saw off the political threat, but the gap between the two men widened.

This summer, Mr Anwar was humiliated by the appointment by Dr Mahathir of his old friend, Daim Zaiduddin, as "Special Functions" Minister responsible for economic matters.

Kuala Lumpur has recently been rife with rumours about 51-year-old Mr Anwar's sexual peccadilloes, slurs he has always denied. The authors of one book, entitled *Fifty Reasons Why Anwar Shouldn't Be Prime Minister* are on trial for defamation. To many the smears appear to be a campaign to discredit Mr Anwar with his Muslim constituency.

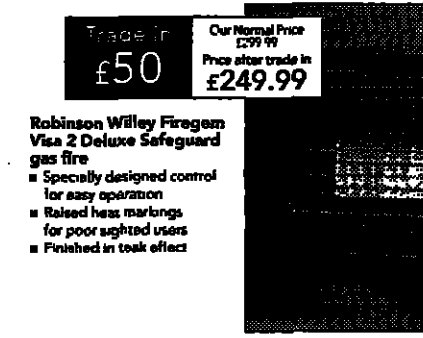
The opposition leader, Lim Kit Siang, said that Mr Anwar's demise threatened further chaos during the regional economic crisis. "The sacking of the deputy prime minister will plunge the country into an unprecedented political crisis and turmoil," said Mr Lim, "unless Dr Mahathir can convincingly establish the legitimacy of the drastic action."

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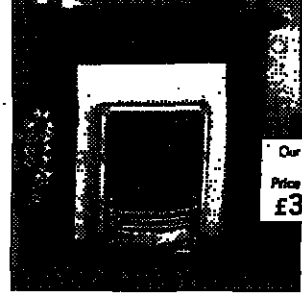


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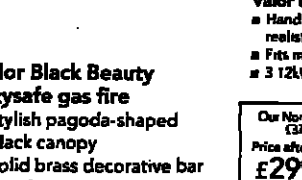


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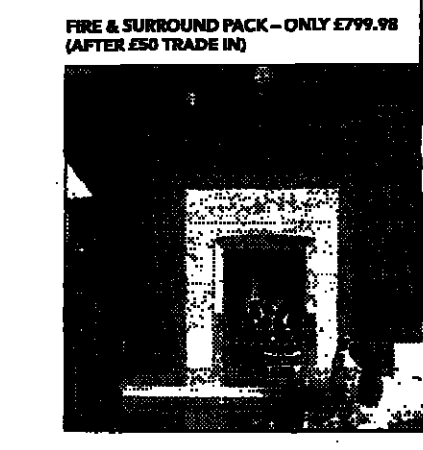
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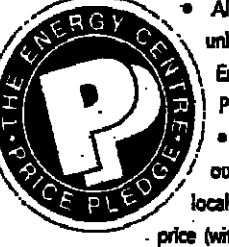
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Central Africa crisis: First conviction for 1994 Rwanda slaughter as warring leaders meet to end conflict in Congo

Hutu mayor found guilty of genocide

IN THE first international conviction for genocide, a United Nations tribunal yesterday found a Rwandan ex-mayor guilty in the savage bloodletting that killed more than 800,000 Rwandans in 1994.

Jean-Paul Akayesu, a Hutu, was convicted of "meticulously organised" genocide, crimes against humanity, murder, torture and rape.

His lawyer said that Akayesu, who maintained his innocence throughout his 18-month trial, would appeal.

Pierre Prosper, the prosecutor, said the case provided "a road map for how we are to proceed" in genocide prosecutions.

He said he was looking forward to going to Akayesu's home town, the central Rwandan village of Taba, and telling survivors of the slaughter: "We did it. We achieved justice."

But in Rwanda, where the slow pace of the tribunal's work has been criticised, the verdict

By KARIN DAVIES
in Arusha

was greeted dispiritedly. In nearly four years, this is the first conviction. Patrick Mazimhaka, a state minister, said: "It has gone on for so long and I think people have given up."

At yesterday's session the chief judge, Laity Kama of Senegal ordered Akayesu to stand as the verdicts were read. Each time a guilty verdict was read out - on nine of fifteen counts - Akayesu winced.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda said the judgment against Akayesu was also the first, by an international court, for sexual violence.

Akayesu, a former teacher born in 1953, was convicted of ordering the killings of 2,000 people who sought his protection in Taba. They were among the 800,000 Rwandans, mostly minority Tutsis but also moderate Hutus, who were

butchered with machetes and nail-studded clubs in a genocide orchestrated by extremists in the former Hutu government.

During yesterday's tribunal session, Laity Kama said the three-judge panel had rejected arguments that Akayesu was helpless to prevent the killings. A mayor "had a lot of power", the judge said.

Akayesu was held over in Arusha, Tanzania, pending a pre-sentencing hearing on 23 September. The maximum penalty is life imprisonment.

"The penalty doesn't match the crime," said Chantal Kayitesi, who heads a group of widows of the Rwandan slaughter. "But we have to recognise the difference between international laws and ours."

The tribunal is holding 31 people in Arusha, four of whom are on trial. Eight others have been indicted, but not apprehended, and an elderly Rwandan minister is in custody in Texas.



Rwandans crossing into Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, as they fled a post-genocide refugee camp

John Purkin

Kabila in surprise move to join talks

HE SAID he was far too busy with war to attend talks about peace. But President Laurent Kabila, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, surprised everyone yesterday by finally heeding appeals from South Africa's President, Nelson Mandela, to come to talk about the Congolese crisis.

As a military band played Scott Joplin's theme from *The Sting*, the robust Mr Kabila climbed on to the escalator at a Durban conference centre to join more than 50 heads of state at a non-aligned movement summit. His appearance brought gasps from delegates.

Mr Kabila's arrival means all the main players in the war have now been forced or lured to the seaside town for a "summit within a summit", chaired by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan.

There were hopes that Mr Kabila might come under pressure from his military allies, Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, to strike a ceasefire deal, and

BY MARY BRAID
in Durban

of the UN, not SADC, may save face for Mr Kabila.

Just over a week ago Mr Kabila's allies, led by Mr Mugabe, snubbed a SADC peace summit. Yesterday, Mr Mandela was set to meet Mr Mugabe for bi-lateral talks in their first encounter since Mr Mugabe angrily advised Mr Mandela to shut up if he was not prepared to send in troops to Congo.

Mr Mandela's drive for a diplomatic solution only highlighted the gulf between the new democratic leadership in Africa - in which the West places so much hope - and autocratic, old-style African leadership.

Earlier this week such was the animosity between delegations that it was impossible to imagine the enemy camps ever sitting round the same table. But with the rebels in retreat from western Congo - and Angola's and Zimbabwe's own security and political ends largely met - Mr Kabila may well be under pressure now to cut a deal.

But Mr Annan still has his work cut out. For the crisis is part of a bigger hornets' nest.

Central is Rwanda's obsession with national security, following the 1994 genocide of 800,000 Tutsis by militiamen from the majority Hutu population. The Hutu mass murderers found sanctuary in eastern Congo under former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. Mr Kabila failed miserably to rout them out.

Rwandan insecurity has now sparked two rebellions in the Congo. This week Rwanda was lobbying the non-aligned summit to recognise the widespread persecution of Tutsis, particularly in Congo.

And some analysts say Mr Kabila is no longer in charge of Congo. In the east, Uganda and Rwanda have occupied corridors creating a buffer zone and *de facto* partition.

The possibility of the huge, unstable Congo becoming a buffet table at which its nine neighbours might pick has been on the cards since the end of Mr Mobutu's corrupt 32-year rule.

Greg Mills, director of the South African Institute of International Affairs, believes Mr Kabila's days are numbered.

And then Congo faces the same old problem. Who can govern and hold together a long-suffering, bankrupt country, with no democratic institutions, in which the West's interest has always been shaped by greed for its mineral wealth?



Kabila: Uncompromising

stop a war that threatens permanently to partition Congo and engulf the entire region. His opening speech, however, was uncompromising. He simply maintained his position that Ugandan and Rwandan troops should remove themselves from the country.

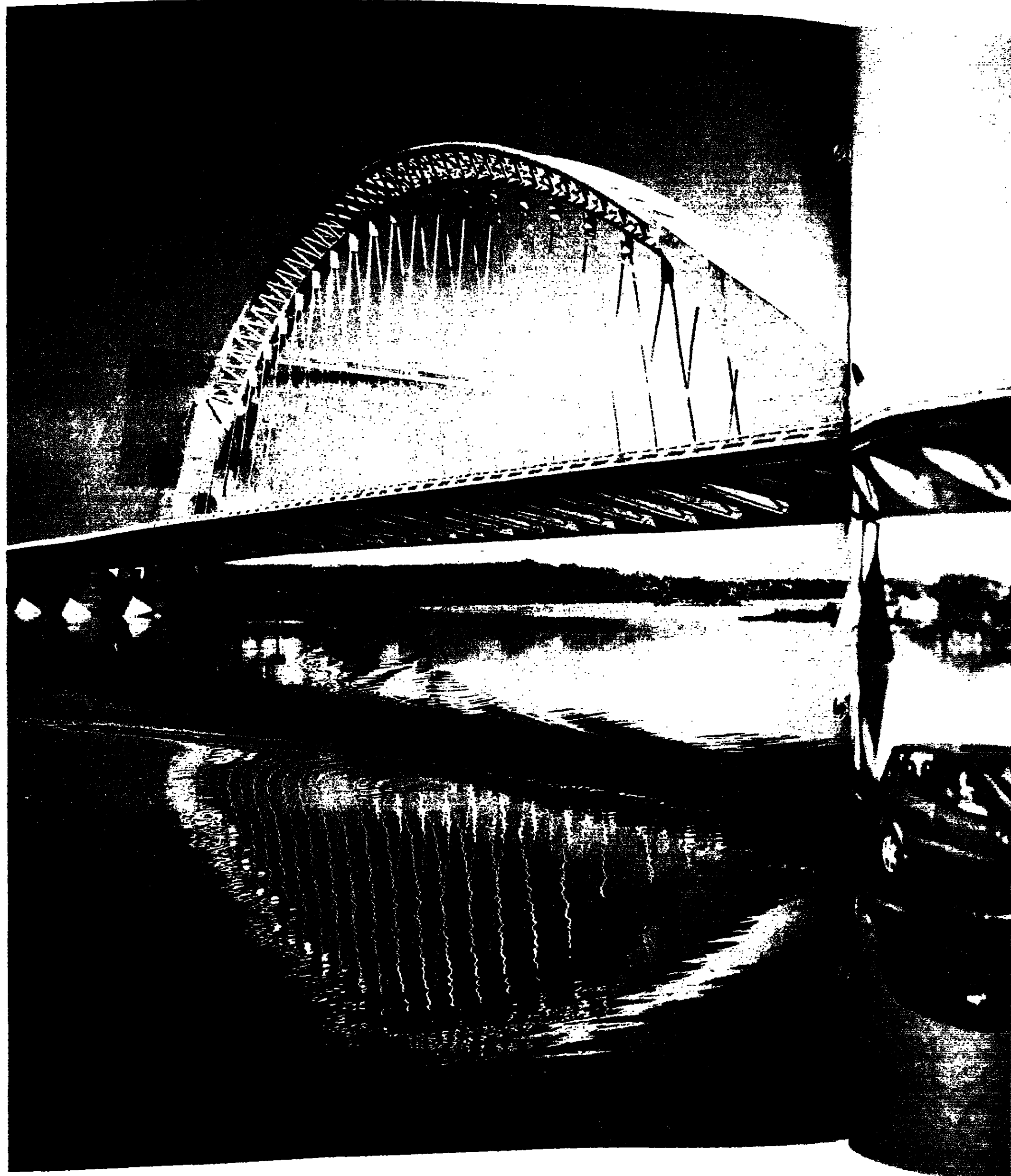
Mr Annan will begin talks with the main players this morning. On one side is the Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, and the Rwandan President, Pasteur Bizimungu; on the other, Mr Kabila, the Angolan President, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the Namibian President, Sam Nujoma, and the Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe.

Mr Kabila's allies have all sent troops to prop up his regime, creating bitter division in the 14-member Southern African Development Community. Mr Mandela, SADC chairman, is also expected to take part in talks, in which the sponsorship

HAMISH MCRAE

'Two East Asian countries are trying to buck the markets: one by bullying, the other by buying'

— THE THURSDAY REVIEW, PAGE 5



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السلامة والبيئة

found ocide New York tries to patent skyline

BY DAVID USSORNE
in New York

THE NEW YORK offices of this paper command quite a view. You can see the Chrysler Building, the skyscraper at Rockefeller Center and its sculpture of Atlas on Fifth Avenue. Any one of these might make a nice logo for a column from this city.

Stop right there. Just because these structures and others might seem like the landmarks that define Manhattan in the eyes of the world, it does not mean they belong to the world. They belong to the people who own them. Increasingly, these people have no desire to share them around.



The New York skyline. That such landmarks define Manhattan in the eyes of the world does not mean they belong to the world, and owners of the buildings are reaching for their lawyers

Their weapon is the trademark. Trademarks exist for the Chrysler Building and such are the bread and butter of their trade. Hollywood needs to worry too - Godzilla should be careful before kicking over the Flatiron building. "The owners

of the trademarks want to make sure that they are not disparaged or demeaned," said Keri Christ of the law firm Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy, representing the owners of the Chrysler Building, Flat-

iron and Rockefeller Center. "The word is pretty much out there that these are protected designs and that the owners are very serious about protecting the integrity of their designs."

The concern is that the image of the Chrysler, for instance, as an upscale location for potential tenants, might be damaged if its likeness is attached to products of uncertain quality. Like a newspaper column. But even an upscale rip-

off attracts lawyers. Thus Fish Eddy, a posh chain of tableware stores, is doing battle with Ms Christ and her client. Its best-selling plates have a naive sketch of the New York skyline, including a wobbly rendition of

the Chrysler Building. So far, Fish Eddy has shown no inclination to discontinue the plates or at least remove the Chrysler from its rim design. On the contrary, it is relishing the publicity.



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FRONTLINE

TWAE CHON, SOUTH KOREA

A refuge to ease the pains of war

PERCHED IN the low hills and rice paddies of the village of Twae Chon, an hour and half's drive from the tumult of central Seoul, Nanumji Jib would be a tranquil place for anyone to live out their last years. Its name means the "House of Sharing" and here, tended by four full-time helpers and a stream of willing young volunteers, live seven Korean women between the ages of 73 and 86.

For most of the week they live quietly - writing, reading and chatting in the bungalows specially built for them around a paved courtyard. Several of the women are skilled artists, and on most days they receive visitors, who are escorted around their small museum. But once a week the routine is interrupted.

Every Wednesday, without fail, they drive to Seoul to gather in front of the Japanese embassy. And there, accompanied by other equally frail old women, they chant, shout and weep at the sufferings of the past and the continuing injustice of the present.

The House of Sharing may look idyllic but it is a retirement home like no other, a place where the agony of the

men to join up." The girls were told they would be working as nurses or sewing uniforms in military factories.

The dreadful truth only became clear when it was too late, after Miss Kim's arrival in Shanghai. "I saw so many soldiers and these shoddy tents where we had to work. I cried and cried for so many nights, I don't know how many nights I cried. Some of the friends who came with me took their own lives."

Estimates of the total numbers of comfort women vary between 80,000 and 300,000, and, for those who survived, the sufferings did not end with the war. Many found themselves stranded in obscure corners of Asia with no means of returning home.

Those who did make it returned to a deeply conservative culture in which their violation was a source of shame rather than pity. "We didn't open our mouths out of shame," says Miss Kim. It wasn't until 1991 that a Korean comfort woman talked openly about her enslavement, but since then it has become the most bitter single issue in the always touchy relationship between South Korea



Former 'comfort women' protesting in Seoul AP

Second World War is kept vividly alive. Its residents are all former "comfort women", the bitterly ironic euphemism employed by the Japanese Imperial Army for the hundreds of thousands of women it rounded up and forced to work as prostitutes in frontline military brothels.

The "comfort stations" where they were enslaved were set up in every corner of the territory conquered by Japan; the comfort women included Filipinas, Chinese, Indonesians, Thais and Cambodians. But four out of five of them were Korean, and it is in Korea that their sufferings are best remembered and their cause most actively pursued.

Typical among them is Kim Soon Duk, who was taken from her mountain village in 1937 at the age of 17. Korea had been a Japanese colony for 27 years, and the Imperial Army was spreading its tentacles through China. "The military came round to each house and demanded that they provide one young girl each," she says. "It was just as if a war had broken out and they were enlisting young

and Japan. It is likely to flare again next month when Kim Deo Jung makes his first visit to Tokyo as South Korean president - during their weekly demonstrations, the comfort women have been pressing him to raise their cause with the Japanese Prime Minister, Keizo Obuchi. The Japanese government has acknowledged the existence of wartime sex slaves and last year 3 million yen (£13,000) was offered to the survivors, with a letter of apology from Ryutaro Hashimoto, then prime minister.

But Tokyo has insistently refused to pay any compensation as a government - the money on offer was provided by private companies and only a handful of comfort women have accepted it.

Out of the multitude of comfort women, only 185 Koreans have stepped forward to announce themselves publicly, and more than 30 of those have since died. Apart from everything else, this is what makes the House of Sharing a unique old people's home. In the next 10 or 20 years, it will run out of residents.

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

BUSINESS

VW's Piech makes a pitch for stake in rival BMW

BRIEFING

Yorkshire Water flows west

YORKSHIRE WATER yesterday swooped across the Pennines with the £120m acquisition of a council-owned waste disposal company. Its Yorkshire Environmental Solutions (YES) arm is buying 3C Waste from Cheshire County Council and Halton and Warrington Borough Councils.

Based in Chester, 3C serves six million people in Cheshire, South Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and North Wales. It is one of the seven largest landfill operators in the UK, handling a quarter of the waste disposal needs of the North-west, operating four landfill sites and 27 civic tips.

Yorkshire Water said 3C would retain its own identity and operate alongside the existing Yorkshire Environmental Global Waste Management division. The deal follows last month's proposed merger between YEGWM and Waste Recycling Group, giving the Yorkshire group a 46 per cent stake in WRG.

Captain's full steam ahead

SHARES OF Britn Allcroft, which owns the rights to the Thomas the Tank Engine characters, yesterday jumped 40p to 238.5p on news that the company now plans to follow the successful merchandising of Thomas with a Captain Pugwash (left) television series. Reporting a 29 per cent increase in pretax profits to £3 million for the half-year

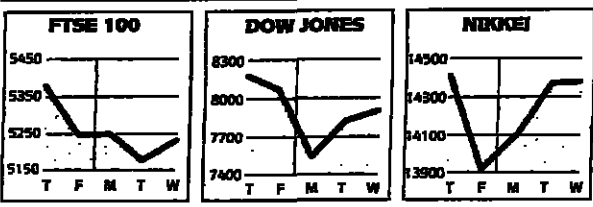
to June 30th, chairman Roger Llewellyn said that he expected further strong growth from Thomas and the Captain Pugwash launch.

Regulator seeks comments

THE ELECTRICITY regulator Ofwat yesterday said it was issuing a consultation paper on the regulatory issues involved in the proposed £4.8bn merger of Scottish Hydro-Electric and Southern Electric, and invited comments on the matter by 18 September.

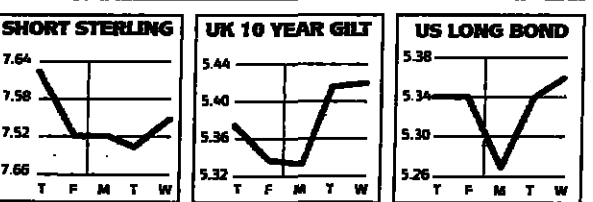
Ofwat's director-general Stephen Littlechild said he would consider whether the merger could affect the setting of price controls, because the number of independent electricity licensees had been reduced, and if there were any possible implications for competition in the supply and generation of electricity.

STOCK MARKETS



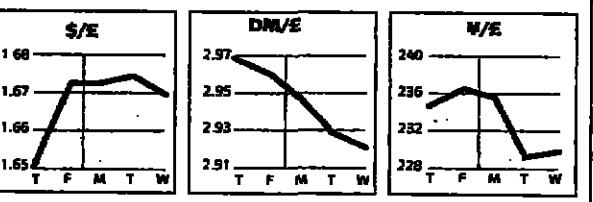
Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5235.80	66.70	1.29	6183.70	4382.80	3.76
FTSE 250	4712.00	84.70	1.83	5970.90	4428.30	4.26
FTSE 350	2992.80	34.20	1.19	3968.10	2141.80	3.85
FTSE All Share	2426.75	33.50	1.40	2886.52	2106.59	3.85
FTSE SmallCap	2081.30	33.90	1.66	2793.80	2044.90	3.91
FTSE Fledgling	1159.90	19.70	1.73	1517.10	1140.20	4.34
FTSE AIM	881.50	18.70	2.17	1146.90	862.80	1.53
FTSE EBOC 100	912.85	22.13	2.49			
Dow Jones	7901.84	74.92	0.96	9367.84	6971.32	1.88
Nikkei	14376.62	6.99	0.05	18775.08	13664.74	1.06
Hang Seng	7355.67	293.20	4.15	15242.65	6544.79	5.59
Dax	4570.50	178.69	3.73	6217.83	3467.24	3.23

INTEREST RATES



Index	8 month	Yr Chg	Yr Chg	10 year	Yr Chg	Long bond	Yr Chg
UK	7.61	0.30	7.36	-0.27	5.42	-1.61	5.12
US	5.59	-0.13	5.50	-0.56	5.09	-1.19	5.36
Japan	0.62	0.05	0.62	-0.04	1.34	-0.86	1.90
Germany	3.48	0.17	3.63	-0.01	4.29	-1.38	5.12

CURRENCIES



at Spot	Change	Yr Ago	at Spot	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6685	-0.43c	1.5880	0.5990	+0.15p
D-Mark	2.9208	-0.88pf	2.9174	D-Mark	1.7507
Yen	229.95	+¥1.82	193.27	Yen	137.72
E Index	105.00	-0.30	101.90	S Index	111.90

Comd	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Chg	Yr Ago	Rate	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	12.09	-0.03	18.18	GDP	115.40	2.60	112.48
Gold (\$)	281.05	2.00	322.50	RPI	163.00	3.50	157.49
Silver (\$)	4.85	0.12	4.27	Base Rates	7.50	7.00	

www.bloomberg.com/uk SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.7759	Medan (new peso)	15.20
Austria (schillings)	19.92	Netherlands (guilders)	3.1993
Belgium (francs)	58.65	New Zealand (\$)	3.1747
Canada (\$)	2.5197	Norway (krone)	12.58
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8331	Portugal (escudos)	208.57
Denmark (krone)	10.87	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0924
Finland (markka)	8.6842	Singapore (\$)	2.7695
France (francs)	9.5220	Spain (pesetas)	240.44
Germany (marks)	2.8470	South Africa (rand)	9.9774
Greece (drachma)	484.40	Sweden (krone)	12.88
Hong Kong (\$)	12.56	Switzerland (francs)	2.3483
Ireland (pounds)	1.1286	Thailand (bahts)	61.38
India (rupees)	65.34	Turkey (liras)	447248
Israel (shekels)	5.9261	USA (\$)	1.6331
Italy (lira)	2615		
Japan (yen)	225.43		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0905		
Malta (lira)	0.6249		

Rates for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

THE CHAIRMAN of Volkswagen, the German carmaker, Ferdinand Piech has renewed his attempts to court arch-rival BMW with an offer to buy up to 25 per cent of the company.

The \$5bn offer comes weeks after the two companies buried the hatchet over Rolls-Royce Motors and agreed to split the Rolls and Bentley brands.

Piech made the extraordinary offer in an interview at the Hannover truck show with the prestigious German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

BMW shares rose 77 marks, or 6.3p per cent, to 1,302 marks and VW shares rose by 1.5 marks, or 1.1 per cent on the news.

Significantly, Sueddeutsche is the main newspaper in Munich, BMW's home town, leading some analysts to speculate

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

that the remarks were deliberately aimed at sowing dissension within the Quandt family, the 46 per cent shareholder in the Bavarian company, whose consent would be needed for any merger deal.

The move appears to have been prompted by VW's concerns that it may be left behind following the giant Daimler-Chrysler merger earlier this year. Piech has failed to strike a deal with either Volvo or Scania, the Swedish truckmakers.

BMW yesterday refused to comment on Piech's remarks insisting that the issue was a matter for its shareholders.

But the BMW management board chairman, Eberhard Von Kuenheim, said when the idea



Bernd Pischetsrieder, of BMW, (left) is being wooed by Ferdinand Piech, of VW, for a "dream merger"

of a defensive share swap between the two companies was first mooted by Piech that he believed the conditions were not right.

Von Kuenheim is very close to Joanna Quandt, matriarch of

the BMW clan. She is the widowed third wife of Herbert Quandt who bought 30 per cent of the company in 1960 at a time when it was virtually on its knees.

Piech has clearly not been

put off. Analysts said he may have been encouraged by the rumblings that followed a DMSn rights issue earlier this year which suggested that the younger generation of Quandts were not as committed to the company as Joanna.

The BMW management, say observers, is also getting more chary about being able to finance future model development on its own, particularly now it is finding turning Rover around a harder task than it originally assumed.

The Quandts were recently on the receiving end of a similar approach from the Agnelli family who control Fiat, the Italian carmaker. They are also increasingly nervous about the company's long-term future should the DaimlerChrysler deal spark a wholesale shake-

out in the industry, particularly if followed by another downturn in car sales.

One analyst said: "BMW is making hay at the moment. But this is a company which thinks long-term, 10 to 25 years. Scale is important in this industry."

"If they were to put themselves up for sale, you would be trampled in the rush. But they may be wondering that if they hang about too long the other attractive partners may have all paired off."

The precise breakdown of the Quandt family shareholding is a closely guarded secret. But a German newspaper claimed several years ago that Joanna has 17.9 per cent, while Stefan, Herbert's son owns 18 per cent. Joanna's daughter Susanna Klatten owns 13.2 per cent.

Dow rally goes into second day

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

THE CITY breathed a collective sigh of relief as Wall Street soared for the second day running despite a continuing stream of banks owning up to suffering big hits from the Russian crisis.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average index was trading more than 100 points higher at 7,938.14, a rise of more than one per cent.

The rise followed Tuesday's 288.36 point rebound, reassuring those who feared that the recovery after two weeks of savage falls would prove to be a one-day wonder.

Earlier in London the FTSE 100 had closed up 66.7 points at 5,235.3. Equity markets elsewhere in Europe and in Asia bounced back even more strongly. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index closed more than 4 per cent up, while France's CAC-40 was 2.3 per cent up on the day.

Frankfurt's DAX jumped by a shade under 2 per cent. The German Finance Minister Theo Waigel, said Germany was sticking by forecasts of 3 per cent growth this year despite the Russian crisis.

Brokers said that after the savage falls which have wiped out all of this year's gains, stocks were starting to look attractive again. However, with little sign of any large-scale buying, dealers remained sceptical about the markets returning to the highs set in July any time soon.

"People see some value but they have a nagging doubt that it is all going to go horribly wrong," said Bob Semple at BT Alex Brown. "I don't see the volatility going away."

Germany's Dresdner Bank came out with figures showing that its lending to Russia stood at DM1bn (£350m) - 32 per cent higher than previously stated - of which 60 per cent is secured by risk provisions.

That does not include an undisclosed holding in rouble-denominated bonds where the bank has written down the value of its holding by DM100m.

Two more big American banks, Chase Manhattan and Donaldson Lufkin Jenrette, disclosed losses because of the Russian turmoil.

Chase said it expected to take a \$200m (£120m) charge, while DLJ said profits so far this quarter were \$40m down from the \$120m reported this time last year.

Goldman Sachs, which is in a delicate position ahead of its flotation, said yesterday it had no intention of making any statement about any Russian exposure despite rumours that it too had lost money in the turmoil. The firm insists its exposure is minimal.

The Russian bank, SBS-Agro, yesterday admitted it could not meet \$1bn of foreign obligations. SBS Warburg has been appointed to handle the restructuring.

Hamish McRae, Review, page 5

Maiden issues shock profit warning

MAIDEN, THE UK's sole independent billboard advertising group, yesterday stunned the market with a profit warning that prompted fears of a general slowdown in advertising spending across the economy.

Shares in Maiden halved, plunging 219p to 212.5p, after the group said sales in the third quarter had failed to recover after suffering a slowdown during the World Cup.

The warning sent tremors through the rest of the media sector, knocking shares in com-

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

panies with a heavy exposure to advertising spending. Magazine publisher EMAP shares dropped 74p to 940p and Capital Radio shed 16p to close at 574p.

Ron Zeghibe, Maiden's chief executive, said advertising had dried up during the World Cup. "Advertisers looked at the high rates being charged by television and just said, 'We're not going to spend,'" he said.

"It may be that outdoor advertising is a leading indicator

for what's going on in the sector," said one analyst. "But it may also be that when budgets are cut it's the marginal media that suffer."

Indeed, Johnston Press, the regional newspaper group which depends heavily on classified advertising, yesterday sounded an upbeat note about prospects for the year.

But Mr Zeghibe insisted that the outlook for national advertising was gloomy. "I'm talking to media planning and buying agencies and they're all saying

the same thing," he said. Roughly 95 per cent of Maiden's advertising comes from large national accounts.

And Mr Zeghibe said the stock market had overreacted to the bad news. "Either the share price recovers or we might as well take the company private," he warned.

The company insisted it would not be cutting its capital expenditure plans designed to strengthen its market position.

Murdoch and Mediaset in pay-TV talks

NEWS CORP chief Rupert Murdoch yesterday discussed a deal which could lead to the creation of a pan-European pay-TV network in talks with executives from Mediaset SpA, Italy's biggest private broadcaster, says the chairman of Mediaset, Fedele Confalonieri.

In meetings in Milan, and at lunch at the country villa of Mediaset's controlling shareholder

BY ANNE HANLEY
in Rome

Silvio Berlusconi, Mr Murdoch studied the so-called "Traviata" plan for a bail-out of the ailing German media group of Leo Kirch, Mr Confalonieri said.

News Corp and Mediaset are widely expected to buy around 20 per cent of the Kirch Group, which has seen cashflow prob-

lems worsen as it struggles to meet payment deadlines for rights to Hollywood productions and forthcoming World Cup soccer events bought for its loss-making DF1 digital network.

The Traviata deal would give Mr Murdoch his long-awaited foothold in Europe, denied him twice in the past three years by Mr Berlusconi, who turned down offers from

News Corp - though British Sky Broadcasting - to purchase his 50.6 per cent stake in Mediaset.

It would also give Mr Berlusconi and Mr Murdoch a head start in Europe's fast-growing digital broadcasting market.

Mr Berlusconi, a former Italian prime minister, was not at the meetings or lunch. Mr Confalonieri said as he left the villa, Mr Berlusconi's daughter Ma-

rina and son Piersilvio - respectively deputy chairman and board member of Mediaset - did participate. It was the younger Berlusconi who persuaded their father to throw out Mr Murdoch's 6 billion lire (£2bn) bid for control of Mediaset last spring.

Mr Confalonieri refused to divulge details of yesterday's talks, saying only that Mr Murdoch's was "a courtesy visit"

and that no further meetings were scheduled for the near future. "But things move fast in this industry," he added.

Yesterday's talks came as the Media Partners company of former Berlusconi associate Rodolfo Hecht pushed ahead with its plans for a European football super league, to be broadcast on an as yet unspecified pay-TV network.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

UK STOCKS rallied yesterday, as overnight gains on Wall Street and bargain-hunting domestic investors ended a four-day losing streak. But their gains halved in late afternoon when a nervous opening by the Dow stifled the buying momentum. The FTSE-100 closed up 66.7 points, or 1.29 per cent, at 5,235.3 - failing to recoup Tuesday's 80-point loss. Medium caps rose 84.7 to 4712.0, and small caps 33.9 to 2081.3. IT stocks led the rally as analysts said that Tuesday's sell-off had been overdone and a rebound was due.

Market Report, page 21

NEW YORK

US STOCKS rose for a second day as investors snapped up shares of companies with fast-growing earnings, including Cisco Systems, Dell and drug makers. The Dow rose by 110.97 points, 1.4 per cent, to 7,938.14 in early trade. With US corporate profits expected to rise between 3 and 4 per cent this quarter, "the market is likely to pay up for companies that can sustain double-digit earnings growth," said John Davenport, chief investment officer for large stocks at Mentor Investment Group.

TOKYO

THE BENCHMARK index staged its first three-day rally in two months on signs that the political deadlock over a bailout plan for the financial sector may be broken. The Nikkei 225 rose 6.99 points, or 0.05 per cent, to 14,376.62. Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi rose 68 yen to 1,088 and Sumitomo Bank gained 88 to 1,139 after the Nihon Keizai newspaper reported that the opposition New Peace Party has drafted a plan to bolster the banking system that includes provisions to inject public funds into lenders before they go bankrupt.

KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIA'S benchmark KLSE index recouped almost all of Tuesday's 13 per cent loss, ending up 12 per cent at 294.59 as investors covered short-stock positions amid the confusion over the introduction of foreign exchange and capital controls. The stock exchange said the new rules did not impose a one-year moratorium on share sales, but proceeds from such sales would have to be kept in Malaysia for at least a year. The central bank said it had fixed the ringgit indefinitely at 3.80 to the dollar.

SAO PAULO

SHARES in Brazil's benchmark index headed north after the Bovespa posted a handsome 6.87 per cent jump at Tuesday's end on the back of Wall Street. The Bovespa climbed 2.7 per cent to a high of 7,185 points in early trade. Brazil and Venezuela could be pressured to devalue after Colombia widened its exchange rate band to allow for a steep depreciation of local currency. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has vowed not to devalue the real against the dollar.

07/21/2015

HSBC a victim of Asian backlash

THERE COULD SCARCELY be a more telling symbol of the insanity gripping world financial markets than the disclosure that the Hong Kong government now owns 8.91 per cent of HSBC, the world's largest bank and until now, at least, a standard bearer for laissez faire capitalism and unfettered free trade.

Sir William Purves, the wily Scot who led this extraordinary organisation until a few months back, must be having kittens at the very thought of it.

Just to put the news in context, this is the Communist-led Chinese people taking a near 10 per cent stake in the capitalist world's biggest bank, the owner of Midland Bank in this country to boot. By any stretch of the imagination, this is a turn up for the books.

At this stage, it isn't clear what the emergence of this new shareholder means for HSBC. But it is hard to see how being part nationalised can in any way be positive. As far as we know, there was no particular purpose to the stake building - apart from the declared one of propping up the Hong Kong stock market.

In the past couple of weeks, the Hong Kong government has accumulated big shareholdings across a range of blue chip stocks in an attempt to thwart the activities of nasty Anglo-Saxon speculators. If there is a further hidden agenda, we can only guess at it.

The Chinese are being as inscrutable as ever.

One general observation can none the less be made. The support operation being mounted in Hong Kong is symptomatic of a wider backlash across the Far East and other parts of the developing world against free market capitalism.

This finds its wildest expression in the rhetoric of Mahathir Mohamed, prime minister of Malaysia, who in putting up the shutters on



OUTLOOK

the outside world this week, said the free market system had failed his people, so that it was time to try something else.

It is this belief - that it is indeed possible to buck the markets - that has led China to buy big stakes in HSBC and other leading Hong Kong companies. In the West, we all know this to be a seriously misguided policy response to the financial and economic crises now enveloping these countries.

There are no successful examples of isolationism that can be pointed to; by pursuing this path, Mahathir may succeed in keeping his grip on power for a while longer, but he condemns his people to the sort of poverty that afflicts his neighbour, once prosperous Burma.

Unfortunately, none of this is going to stop the backlash. As long as Mahathir is prime minister, he's going to pursue these policies, and as long as Hong Kong has the reserves to do so, China will continue to believe it can row against the current. They'll be learning their lesson the hard way.

But although what is happening in Asia and Russia represents a serious setback to the process of globalisation, lasting possibly many

years, there is no reason to suppose it to be permanent.

These political leaders are like latter-day Robert Maxwells; they want the benefits of international capital markets without having to obey their disciplines. Unfortunately for them, a successful alternative to free market capitalism has yet to be found.

It seems unlikely in the extreme that prime minister Mahathir is going to be the one to do so.

Monsoon

PETER SIMON, the Armani-wearing chairman of the Monsoon fashion chain, has a little rule for the boardroom. Directors are not allowed to mention the share price.

If they do mention it, they must pay a £100 fine into a kitty, which is distributed to the company's favourite charity. So far the kitty has nothing in it. If other directors follow the example set by Mr Simon, they never bother to look at the share price anyway.

Which is probably just as well, given its performance. Monsoon came to the market in February at a racy multiple of 19 times the pre-

vious year's earnings. Mr Simon sold shares worth £85m on the strength of this rating and they haven't seen that price since. Prior to yesterday's results, the shares had lost almost half their value. No wonder this tragedy is deemed unfathomable in the boardroom.

Is Monsoon simply a victim of the way the retail sector as a whole has been hammered, or is this a question of the company being over-priced at the outset? The pricing of Monsoon float raised eyebrows at the time. It was never clear whether it was Mr Simon pushing for as high an exit price as he could get, or whether his advisers, the then NatWest Securities, genuinely thought the company worth what they were asking. Monsoon rode in on the back of 12 years of unbroken profits growth. But it had also pulled its float before amid concerns over the company's complicated ownership structure.

Since then, sentiment has turned against retailers as consumer spending slows and interest rates edged ever higher. Monsoon has not done anything wrong. It yesterday delivered its 13th year of profit growth and its sales, though 6 per cent down on a same store basis,

were not considered poor given the grim summer weather.

The sector has been so unloved that even bargain basement pricing doesn't seem to help. Shares in New Look, which came to the market at the second time of asking in the spring, are also below their issue price despite their discount rating.

The timing of these flotations was plainly poor, given the subsequent downturn in the economic cycle, but perhaps Mr Simon was giving us a sign yesterday that we have reached the bottom. He bought £200,000 worth of Monsoon shares and it's a fair bet he looked up the price before doing so.

JJB Sports

WHEN A RIGHTS issue flops, it is usually something that both company and advisers would like quickly to forget. Not in the case of JJB Sports, however. The City was positively glowing in the apparent failure of this £105m cash call yesterday. The reason? The flop appears to vindicate the traditional rights method at a time when it is under investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for

being anti-competitive.

American investment banks have been complaining long and hard that the British underwriting system for rights issues and flotations amounts to a cartel, from which they are often excluded. Furthermore, they claim, it means British companies pay too much for their new capital. Well here's a case, the sponsors, Warburg Dillon Read are able to say, where the company ends up on top. Thanks to the underwriting cartel, JJB Sports gets its £105m at the previously agreed price, despite the fall in the shares which has occurred since.

That fall is no reflection on the quality of the company or the acquisition of the new money is earmarked for - Sports Division. Rather it is simply a reflection of the setback in the market. That's precisely what sub-underwriters get paid for their commission to protect against. All of which makes the adjudication faced by the MMC more complicated still. You won't find David Whelan, chairman of JJB Sports, complaining that he's been ripped off, or in this case many American investment bankers protesting about how they missed out on the sub-underwriting.

Heavy weather for retail newcomers



Fashion retailer Monsoon has reported 13 consecutive years of rising profits, but the poor weather has knocked sales by 6 per cent this summer

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

News Analysis: Monsoon shares have halved since the company came to the market in February. Is this just part of the general gloom in retailing or is it something more?

MONSOON AND Matalan, two recently floated fashion retailers, recorded rare share price gains yesterday as they reported better-than-expected results. But the mini-revival still leaves shares well below their issue price while Matalan is only a few pence ahead of the price offered to investors.

Monsoon, whose stores specialise in an upmarket ethnic look, saw its shares lose almost half their value between their flotation in February and yesterday's figures. Shares in Matalan, which operates a more value-based format in out-of-town stores, have fallen by 20 per cent since their high point in June.

These two groups are not alone in their plight. Any investor who subscribed to retail new issues this year has had their fingers burned. New Look, the budget-priced fashion chain, and Game, the computer games specialist, also proved

to be market disappointments. While UK markets have clearly been spooked by the Asian crisis, Russian meltdown and gyrations on Wall Street, the retail sector has been a significant underperformer.

Between the start of the year and the end of July, the general retail sector underperformed the FT All Share by 15.7 per cent. There has been a revival in the past few weeks, but this has not helped the smaller stocks.

The sector has improved as perceptions changed on the future direction of interest rates. But investors have been targeting mainly the larger and more liquid defensive stocks. Funds have been directed principally towards the FTSE 100 retailers - Marks & Spencer, Boots, Kingfisher and Great Universal Stores, which are seen as "safe havens" in troublesome times. Smaller retailers have found their stock even

more unloved than usual. "Smaller retailers have been hit from two angles," says Louise von Blixen, retail analyst at SG Securities. "The whole market has turned down and they cannot escape that. And the retail sector has been unpopular after a spate of profit warnings."

Nick Hawkins at Merrill Lynch says size does matter in markets like these. "The danger with smaller companies is that when you get a slowdown they are more exposed. They have less flexibility to cut costs and they do not have the same financial muscle to squeeze suppliers."

Some analysts argue that some of the recent retail new issues have been over-priced, or came to the market under a cloud. Monsoon, for example, had abandoned a previous attempt to float in 1996. When it tried again it came on a rating of 19, and only 25 per cent of the

equity was floated. Matalan raised City eyebrows by floating on a similar rating to Marks & Spencer. Only New Look, which had also pulled out of a previous flotation attempt, was priced competitively at around 13 times. But even that has not been enough to save it from the shift in market sentiment.

Peter Simon, the Monsoon founder and chairman, who made £85m from the float, says the market turned quickly. "Next issued a profits warning literally within weeks of our float. They are one of our key peer group. Then Marks & Spencer showed some disappointing sales over the summer."

Mr Simon denies that the issue was over-priced, even though the shares have barely risen a penny over the placing price. "You choose advisers [BT Alex Brown] and price it. Whether they got 19p per share or 150p was up to them."

His advisers point out that even with a racy price tag, the issue was comfortably subscribed.

Matalan's finance director, Ian Smith, claims the group's shares were priced fairly on flotation. They enjoyed several weeks of bright trading before soaring above 300p when the stock entered the All Share index, which pushed tracker funds into buying. "That was clearly a ridiculous situation," he says.

But has the pendulum swung back too far? Nick Hawkins at Merrill Lynch says: "There are fashions and trends in stock markets and I can't see this situation lasting forever. As we get into 1999, and with interest rates falling, people will start to worry less about the downturn and start thinking more about the upturn. People will start to look at the market and ask: 'Where's the value?'"

They may find the value in the retail sector and among

smaller companies, in particular companies such as Oasis Stores, for example, which now trades on a forward multiple of just seven and yields around 6 per cent. Monsoon shares yield 5 per cent and Next, a former FTSE 100 constituent, produces a similar income.

The retailers themselves claim their ratings bear no relation to their performances. Take Monsoon. It yesterday reported its 13th consecutive year of profit increases with a 13 per cent rise in full-year profits to £28.6m. Margins were maintained despite one of the worst summers on record. Like-for-like sales were down by 6 per cent in current trading, but that was due mainly to the poor weather in June and early July and comparisons with a strong previous year. Sales growth in August was higher in double digits, and there is no stock overhang of summer ranges as the autumn selec-

tions appear on the shelves.

"I never look at the share price in the paper and we have a £100 fine on the board for anyone that mentions it," Mr Simon says. His view is that the management should concentrate on getting things right in the stores. After that, the share price should look after itself.

Monsoon has opened 11 new stores this year, taking its total to 229. It is introducing a range of shoes and a Monsoon perfume. It is also looking to add larger dress sizes, such as 18, 20, and 22 to extend its customer base.

Matalan's results were similarly impressive. It recorded a 163 per cent profit jump to £4.7m with like-for-like sales ahead by 2.7 per cent. Mr Smith feels that Matalan's value priced offers will stand it in good stead in the downturn. "If money gets tight that should help us as we pride ourselves on value for money."

Matalan's shares rose by 25.5p yesterday to close at 246.5p. Monsoon rose 9.5p to 112p helped by director buying.

IN BRIEF

Builder aiming to keep profit level

SHARES IN house builder Wilson Bowden rose 19p to 512.5p as it reported a 23 per cent rise in first half pre-tax profits to £25.8m. Wilson said the holiday period was better than last year and that house reservations were up 8 per cent. It expected full-year 1998 pre-tax profits should at least match last year's result.

Meanwhile, results and order book news from Arney sent its shares 13.5 per cent ahead, or 70p higher, to 587p.

Photo-me up 22p

PHOTO-ME, the biggest operator and manufacturer of coin-operated photo-booths in the world, saw its shares rise from 349p to 371p yesterday on pre-tax profits up 47 per cent to £15.2m on turnover (up 6 per cent) of £168.7m for the year to 30 April - despite having to restate its accounts for the year before after discussions with the Financial Reporting Review Panel, which was "concerned" by its original inclusion of intra-group sales in its turnover figure.

Flowers end wilt

FLYING FLOWERS shares yesterday recovered 28p to 178p after the Jersey-based mail order retailer reported pre-tax profits of £2.8m in the six months to 3 July, down from £3.4m the year before. But this compares with a high of 595p at the end of June, before two profits warnings on the poor response to advertising by its Gardening Direct bedding plants sent its price willing to a low of 125p last Friday.

Total profits fall

INTERIM PROFITS fell 2.5 per cent at Total, the world's ninth-biggest publicly traded oil company, after lower costs at refineries and a strong French economy offset a plunge in oil prices to their lowest in a decade. The world's ninth-biggest publicly traded oil company said profits fell to Fr3.97bn in the six months ended 30 June, from Fr3.98bn the year before.

P&G re-organises

PROCTER & GAMBLE, the world's second-largest maker of household goods, said it will re-organise its business along product lines, rather than geographically, to boost sales and bring new products to markets faster to help double its trade in 10 years.

STANDARD LIFE BANK

At last, a great savings rate for business accounts

BALANCE	1st YEAR INTEREST	2nd YEAR INTEREST	3rd YEAR INTEREST
£1 - £99,999	7.25	5.81	7.03
£100,000 - £999,999	7.30	5.84	7.07
£1,000,000 - £9,999,999	7.32	5.86	7.09
£10,000,000 - £99,999,999	7.38	5.90	7.14
£100,000,000+	7.53	6.04	7.30

7.55%

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301 Day 4-1-1984

Company	301 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First they sent in the troops at the Hong Kong handover, but now China supports the Hong Kong government's sharebuying to fend off speculators. But what will China do with its huge stakes in leading companies?

Why Peking is biggest investor in Hong Kong

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Hong Kong

THE HONG KONG government which prides itself on keeping its nose out of business is now almost certainly the biggest single institutional investor in the local stockmarket. And the authority, having spent more than HK\$100 billion (7.6 billion pounds) of its fiscal reserves buying shares, says the buying spree is not yet over.

The precise level of its stake in Hong Kong companies is not known because local stock exchange rules require disclosure only of holdings which exceed 10 per cent of the issued equity. In London the stock exchange requires disclosure of any holding above 3 per cent.

For this reason it is known that the government owns almost 9 per cent of London listed HSBC Holdings, making it by far the largest single shareholder. Prudential Corp. had been the biggest shareholder with 4 per cent of the equity.

The government may now own more than 3 per cent of all the shares in the companies in the blue chip Hang Seng Index (HSI). This means it has a big stake in companies controlled by ubiquitous tycoons such as Li Ka-shing, Lee Shau-kee and Cheng Yu-tung. They are all associates of Tung Chee-hwa, the former shipping tycoon who now heads the government. This inevitably has given rise to

The Hong Kong authorities are buying all the blue chips they can get, but traders fear for the future

accusations of cronyism. But the government is also buying stakes in companies such as Hongkong Telecom, controlled by Cable and Wireless plc and some Chinese government-controlled entities such as Citic Pacific.

The government strategy, executed through four medium-sized broking houses, seems to be to buy the market in line with the weightings of the HSI, thus having a direct influence on the index and the high volume of activity in the local futures market which is dominated by the Hang Seng Index contract.

The reason given for this unprecedented and totally unexpected flurry of activity in the financial markets is that the government wants to thwart a "double play" by speculators who are betting on the devaluation of the Hong Kong dollar, which would involve a break of its fixed link to the US dollar. This reasoning says that downward pressure on the equity markets feeds through onto the currency market.

The government claims that since last October the Hong Kong dollar has been subject to four rounds of frontal assault by speculators who have also taken massive short positions

in local shares to create an atmosphere of weakness. Under Hong Kong's currency board system, which is used to maintain the US dollar peg, the government is supposed to keep the currency stable by withdrawing liquidity from the foreign exchange market, thus making it difficult for speculators to take positions in the Hong Kong dollar without incurring heavy costs in terms of high overnight interest rates and considerable risks if they take short positions in the currency and its value falls to fall.

Now the government appears to be saying that the currency board system, which it once described as pretty infallible, is not working. If it was working why would it have gone into the equity markets "to restore order", as the financial secretary Sir Donald Tsang put it.

The effect of "restoring order" has been to provide a wonderful opportunity for holders of Hong Kong equity to get out of a market they see as inherently weak. Were it not for a government ready to buy all the blue chips offered for sale, big institutional investors would probably have kept their holdings because they were reluc-

tant to record heavy losses. Now many investors can get out, without taking a bath. One major local trader said he had never seen anything like it.

"My screen's full of all these sell orders and, on the other side is nothing except this one buyer and that buyer is buying everything," he said. "I've got people ringing me up asking whether these suckers would be in the market for every two-bit stock you've ever heard of".

The government does not see things this way. Sir Donald says that it "intends to hold these stocks for a while and they should be a very good long term investment". He added: "We have switched part of our foreign reserves into blue chips which have been bought at very good prices."

Peking has supported this interventionist policy through the Bank of China (its securities department also got a large share of the buying action), although the stakes in the companies will not come under direct Chinese control.

Yet the government has managed to hold the US dollar peg, and the Hong Kong stock market is performing better than other markets in the region. But the overwhelming body of market opinion believes Sir Donald and his colleagues have scored a colossal home goal. Everyone is waiting for the fat lady to come on and sing. Outlook, page 17

Reflation by the Fed is the economic cure



GEORGE MAGNUS

It looks bad, it is bad, and it will probably get worse. But don't presume Armageddon is coming

However, the economic and financial asteroid hurtling towards us is still on course, and the only financial Bruce Willis on call resides in the Federal Reserve building in Washington DC.

Despite a stable yen recently and the attempts of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to support the Hang Seng index, the long end of the US Treasury bond market continues to reach for ever-lower yields, and UK gilts and

for banks, particularly - but not only - in Europe.

This doesn't have to involve anything more critical than a pulling in of horns. One of the catalysts for the 1930s depression, after all, was an abrupt withdrawal of international lending and the slump in world exports - and we have early signals that both may now be occurring.

But the biggest barrier to global reflation is the myopia of central banks - also reminiscent of a 1930s failing. The Federal Reserve, in particular, is anxious about the inflation potential of tight labour markets and consumer strength. There are at least three reasons why this view is mistaken.

First, there is no underlying inflation pressure in a world economy characterised by over-production. To understand this, we must look at a range of inflation indicators, not just selected parts of the consumer or retail price index. Second, the negative impact of the Asian crisis on producers and manufacturers in the West has been offset by the

enough to recession as makes little difference.

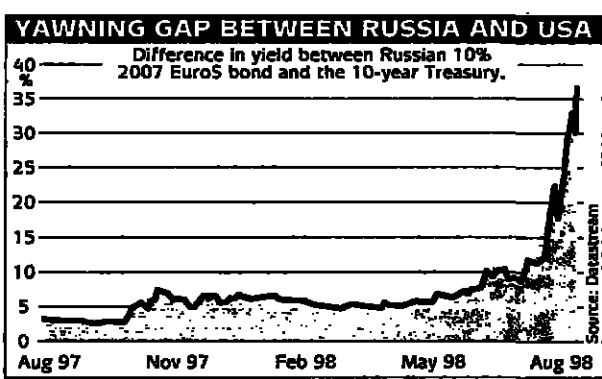
I expect world growth to be around 1.5 to 1.75 per cent this year and to struggle to reach 2.25 per cent in 1999 on several "fingers-crossed" assumptions. Even then, global growth aggregates don't really tell half the story of what is going on and will be likely to ensue in the one-third of the world that is already in recession - in the many emerging nations where poverty, bankruptcy and unrest are reality rather than risk, or in the industrial countries where the cold winds from the Orient and Russia are likely to be picking up this autumn and winter. The prospect of a global recession over the next 12 to 18 months is no longer an outlier on the "tail of the probability distribution curve", as we say delicately in the financial industry.

To confront all these challenges, I fully expect the US to kick off a new economic phase, characterised by monetary reflation - 1 percentage point off short-term interest rates over the next six months, but subject to review because we really don't know how far the Fed will need to go. Base rates in the UK will tumble over the next 12 months. Even the European Central Bank will be hard pushed to justify even the smallest of rate rises, if at all. The Fed's policy shift, in time, should help to bolster hard pressed and indebted emerging countries and allow them to cut interest rates. It should strengthen commodity prices. And, it is hoped, this should come in time to moderate the economic slowdown in industrial countries where manufacturing is already showing the way.

But all this is speculation: we don't know how many spoonfuls of the medicine are needed, but we need to start taking it - soon. Until this happens, markets are likely to continue to flirt with Armageddon. We must hope that the Fed and other major central banks are, or soon will be, singing from the same hymn sheet of economic analysis, otherwise we shall all be singing "Armageddon out of here" - or to pinch a couplet from Bob Dylan's song "Senor".

Senior, senior, do you know where we're heading?
Lincoln County Road or Armageddon?

George Magnus is the Chief Economist of Warburg Dillon Read



European bonds are on fire. On the other side of the risk spectrum, stock prices are now tumbling. The emerging market bond yield spread over US bonds, at nearly 1,600 basis points, is more than twice as big as it was at the height of the Asian crisis last October and November.

With Russia knocked out, the focus has switched to Latin America, notably Venezuela and Brazil. But there are still perfectly good reasons to worry about policy failures in Japan as regards financial industry reforms and the reflation of aggregate demand. There are also good reasons to worry about policy failures in China and Hong Kong despite official pronouncements and actions of late. Last but not least, we should watch the knock-on effects of the Asian and emerging markets crisis

positive effect on households - low inflation, record low bond yields. But this precarious balance is not sustainable. As prices, profits, earnings and growth are downgraded, output and capital investment will be curtailed. Employment growth will slow and eventually unemployment will rise.

Third, the stock market has until now been the last defence between the Goldilocks and Armageddon scenarios. No longer. The downturn in equity prices will generate a significant change in the savings ratio in the US and this will feed directly into lower consumption activity. You don't have to be a John Maynard Keynes to figure this out or what it means on a global scale. Regrettably, the UK is in pole position here - and we have just this week downgraded our forecast of growth in 1999 to 0.3 per cent, close

Aiming for the \$1bn target

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

SKYEPHARMA, THE drug development company, is set to go on an acquisitions spree aimed at doubling its stockmarket value in two years, its chief executive said yesterday.

Ian Gowrie-Smith, the Australian entrepreneur who steered the company through a flotation on Nasdaq in July, said he wanted to turn SkyePharma into a \$1bn dollar company by the year 2000.

SkyePharma's market value on Nasdaq, the US index for high-growth companies, is around \$450m. The shares are also listed in London, where the firm is worth around £230m.

Mr Gowrie-Smith said SkyePharma was targeting US drug companies worth \$20m to \$30m each, calling on \$60m reserves and the issue of new shares. Mr Gowrie-Smith said the company also starts to gain a \$30m-a-year royalty payment early in 1999 from the sales of a new version of SmithKline Beecham best-selling anti-depressant Paxil.

SkyePharma reported an increase in its interim pretax loss to \$10.4m from \$9.2m a year ago, on turnover down 23 per cent to \$5m. The company said the shortfall was due to higher costs for the development of new products and lower revenue. Mr Gowrie-Smith, founder and driving force behind Medeva, another biotechnology group, expected earnings to pick up in the second half. Shares in SkyePharma closed down 1p at 57p.



In Dublin yesterday were (from left) Richard Barnes, finance director, Redmond O'Donoghue, Waterford chief executive, and Brian Patterson, Wedgwood chief PA

CWC and IBM sign £1.8bn IT contract

CABLE & WIRELESS Communications yesterday linked up with IBM in a £1.8bn 10-year deal which will see the computer giant take over 1,000 of the cable group's employees, writes Peter Thal Larsen.

Under the terms of the agreement, believed to be the largest outsourcing deal ever in the UK, IBM will take responsibility for designing, running and supporting CWC's internal computer systems.

CWC will retain control of the software that runs its telecommunications network, and continue to devise its IT strategy. The deal breaks new ground in the telecoms sector, where companies have traditionally guarded their IT systems jealously.

Chris Godsmark, telecoms analyst at Henderson Crosswhite, said: "This gives CWC the potential to have a world-class IT platform with much better potential to handle its customer base. It also breaks the roll out digital services, which

COMPANY RESULTS					
Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day
Admiral (I)	218.1m (192.1m)	7.23m (8.1m)	18.1p (21.0p)	4.5p (4.0p)	23.10.98
Admiral (I)	97.9m (138.7m)	14.1m (13.3m)	14.0p (12.6p)	3.5p (3.0p)	28.10.98
BOI Technology (I)	1.2m (1.0m)	-1.73m (-1.47m)	-8.0p (-13.7p)	0p (-)	-
Bechtel (I)	18.5m (13.2m)	-1.41m (-1.03m)	-1.47p (-0.80p)	0p (-)	-
Bechtel (I)	4.1m (3.1m)	0.00m (0.00m)	0.7p (0.00p)	0p (-)	-
Bell (I)	184.7m (154.5m)	17.5m (17.1m)	18.2p (18.0p)	7.0p (6.5p)	02.11.98
Bell (I)	12.0m (11.3m)	3.0m (2.3m)	8.4p (6.8p)	2.1p (1.9p)	20.11.98
Bell (I)	110.8m (107.7m)	10.7m (7.8m)	16.2p (12.4p)	4.4p (3.7p)	28.10.98
Bell (I)	184.2m (140.7m)	24.1m (15.1m)	22.2p (17.4p)	2.0p (1.3p)	20.11.98
Bell (I)	12.0m (11.4m)	1.20m (1.20m)	3.2p (3.1p)	1.2p (1.1p)	20.11.98
Bell (I)	20.8m (19.4m)	0.00m (0.00m)	3.0p (3.0p)	1.2p (1.1p)	12.10.98
Bell (I)	28.8m (25.7m)	2.8m (2.3m)	2.8p (2.3p)	0p (-)	28.10.98
Bell (I)	210.3m (202.3m)	11.5m (8.3m)	5.1p (3.9p)	2.1p (2.0p)	13.10.98
Bell (I)	27.2m (27.1m)	0.12m (0.00m)	0.5p (0.00p)	0.8p (0.8p)	21.10.98
Bell (I)	116.9m (106.0m)	5.8m (4.2m)	2.7p (2.0p)	0.8p (0.8p)	08.04.98
Bell (I)	125.2m (105.4m)	3.5m (1.0m)	1.9p (1.0p)	1.9p (2.0p)	28.10.98
Bell (I)	81.0m (71.5m)	0.74m (0.55m)	0.2p (0.1p)	1.7p (1.7p)	30.10.98
Bell (I)	107.0m (100.2m)	24.0m (13.2m)	6.4p (6.4p)	1.1p (1.0p)	08.11.98
Bell (I)	22.8m (21.3m)	1.0m (0.9m)	13.5m (11.1p)	5.1p (4.0p)	27.11.98
Bell (I)	12.2m (9.3m)	7.00m (6.3m)	3.3p (3.0p)	1.3p (1.5p)	28.10.98
Bell (I)	110.1m (101.1m)	4.72m (7.02m)	3.8p (5.9p)	0p (-)	-
Bell (I)	32.0m (31.4m)	0.74m (0.74m)	7.0p (7.0p)	3.0p (3.0p)	20.10.98
Bell (I)	0.041m (0.10m)	0.00m (0.00m)	0.00p (0.00p)	0.00p (0.00p)	01.10.98
Bell (I)	15.0m (11.3m)	1.00m (1.7p)	1.00p (1.7p)	0.0p (0.0p)	01.10.98
Bell (I)	218.2m (174.5m)	12.0m (8.3m)	12.0p (8.3p)	3.0p (2.0p)	30.11.98
Bell (I)	162.7m (150.2m)	15.18m (10.32m)	13.15p (8.36p)	6.5p (5.0p)	04.01.99
Bell (I)	74.5m (64.4m)	-1.03m (-1.13m)	-7.15p (-5.50p)	0p (-)	-
Bell (I)	74.5m (64.4m)	4.13m (2.05m)	5.7p (2.55p)	0.0p (0.00p)	05.10.98
Bell (I)	1.1m (1.0m)	-0.00m (-0.04m)	-0.0p (-1.7p)	0p (-)	-
Bell (I)	35.0m (31.2m)	2.4m (4.71m)	1.4p (3.0p)	0.0p (0.00p)	01.10.98
Bell (I)	31.4m (24.3m)	0.00m (0.00m)	0.00p (0.00p)	0.1p (0.00p)	28.10.98
Bell (I)	205.0m (204.4m)	12.7m (10.82m)	13.0p (11.5p)	2.0p (2.0p)	10.10.98
Bell (I)	3.0m (3.0m)	-10.4m (0.00m)	-2.5p (0.00p)	0p (-)	-
Bell (I)	102.7m (174.4m)	0.0m (0.00m)	0.0p (0.00p)	0.0p (0.00p)	30.11.98
Bell (I)	47.0m (45.4m)	7.71m (6.27m)	16.7p (15.42p)	4.0p (3.0p)	30.10.98
Bell (I)	205.1m (203.0m)	12.0m (11.1m)	12.0p (11.1p)	4.0p (3.0p)	10.11.98

Waterford Wedgwood shrugs off Asian woes to boost profit

WATERFORD WEDGWOOD, the fine china and crystal group, yesterday shrugged off the woes being experienced by the luxury goods sector with a 13 per cent rise in first-half operating profits to Ir£14m. The Waterford brand's performance was particularly strong.

The company said the Asian economic crisis had affected sales of Wedgwood china in Japan but the impact had been limited to £1m. Waterford crystal, less exposed to Asian markets, saw profits rise by 36 per cent to Ir£9.1m, helped by the introduction of new products, including a millennium collection. Waterford's US sales rose by 16 per cent on the year.

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

The company said it was examining American sales closely to see if the recent turmoil in financial markets was affecting demand. Richard Barnes, the finance director said: "We have seen zero indication of any kind of slowdown. We see no signs of any changes in the near term but we are monitoring the situation closely."

Rosenthal, the German ceramics firm acquired by Waterford in February, is performing ahead of expectations: it broke even compared to an Ir£2.1m loss in the equivalent period last year.

Rosenthal was boosted by sales of its Versace designer collection and rationalisation of its distribution network in France and Italy. The company has also signed a deal with Bulgari, the luxury goods group, which will see Rosenthal ranges distributed in Bulgari's retail outlets.

Pre-tax profits fell by 12 per cent to Ir£3m partly due to costs associated with the Rosenthal deal. However, Waterford Wedgwood shares, which have fallen in recent months in line with other luxury goods stocks, rose by 2p to close at 52p.

"By any measure, the renaissance of this group has been a significant achievement," said Dr Tony O'Reilly, the group's chairman. "We continue to make progress towards the group sales target and our 15 per cent operating margin."

The company had hoped to achieve the margin target and group sales of Ir£650m by 2000. However, difficult markets in Asia may mean a slight delay in achieving the figure, the company said. "We believe the Asian situation will moderate growth in 1998 but, looking forward, rationalisation will help contain the situation," said the finance director, Richard Barnes.

Group sales rose by 47 per cent to Ir£257.7m in the first half. The proposed interim dividend is 0.4p a share, up 14 per cent.

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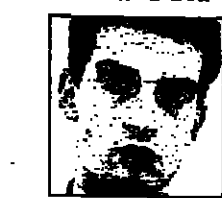
Footsie bounced by bargain hunters

EQUITIES YESTERDAY experienced a feeling shared with bungee-jumping enthusiasts – the rebound after the plunge. Following Tuesday's headlong fall and clawback, Footsie and the second-liners were buoyed by a wave of bargain-hunting as the bulls were bolstered by a sparkling overnight performance on Wall Street.

Electronic buy programmes and old-fashioned cherry-picking triggered hefty rises across the board until early afternoon. But just when traders were starting to enjoy the top of the bounce of their bungee-jump, damping peacefully in the air, they cast their eyes across the ocean and were little pleased with what they saw.

For the second day running the Dow was twisting and turning with precious little lack of direction. New York's tremors quickly spread to London, and Footsie and company were taken for another downward ride which halved their previous gains. In the end, the blue-chip index finished 66.7 points higher at 5,235.8, after having risen as much as 172 points. The medium cap ended up 84.7 points at

MARKET REPORT



FRANCESCO GUERRERA

4,712.0, while the small cap rose 33.9 points to 2,061.3. The feeling is that the roller-coaster is here to stay, with the London market set to mirror the gyrations of its US counterpart for a good few weeks.

IT stocks were in evidence, fighting back with vigour after Tuesday's sharp losses. Misys was the leader of the pack, putting on 198p to 2,502p as analysts pointed out that the sell-off had gone too far. ARM Holdings, up 140p to 1,105p, and Sema, up 66p to 581p, topped a FTSE 250 risers' chart which bore an uncanny resemblance to Tues-

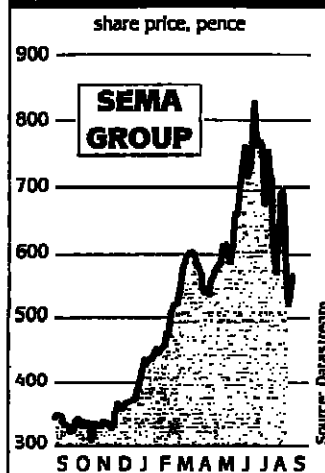
day's fallers table. The two stocks have now recouped most of the losses suffered two days ago.

CMG, the Anglo-Dutch computer software firm, soared 187.5p to 1,862.5p after reporting a 60 per cent leap in profits and encouraging advances in market share. But the IT dominance in the upper echelons of the mid cap index was spilt by the presence of Bodycote: the engineer rose 97.5p to 942.5p in late trading on the back of a few deals between 937p and 940p.

Fellow engineer Siebe was also in blue, with shares putting on 6 per cent to 222.75p, helped by the £186m disposal of a subsidiary and by a Panmure buy note. Smith Industries completed the engineers' hat-trick, rising 30.5p to 671p after a positive trading statement. Johnson Matthey led the side down the metallurgical engineer was down 18.5p to 355.5p on concerns over the market for semi-conductors.

Fears of an expulsion from the FTSE 100 returned to haunt Rank. Shares in the leisure group topped the Footsie fallers after shedding 15.25p to 258p. On the other side of the board, Granada Group bene-

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



SEMA GROUP

fit from bottom-fishing. The media-to-hotels conglomerate soared 10.5 per cent to 778p as the market realised it was trading at a nearly two-year low. Granada was denied the biggest rise spot in the Footsie by Billiton: the mining giant dug up a 15.4 per cent rise to 114p as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson said "buy" ahead of Monday's results.

A profit warning by Maiden, the outdoor advertising group, soured the day for media stocks. The posters group itself took a massive tumble, with the shares halving to 212.5p. And its bearish comments on the advertising market sparked a collapse at EMAP, the magazine publisher. Shares in the paper giant fell 7 per cent to 940p, helped on their way by rumours of a 100,000-share sell overhanging the market.

Capital Radio was also out of time, losing 16p to 574p amid concerns that airwaves advertisers are getting cold feet. Telecoms had a mixed day: Cable & Wireless rose 25.5p after signing an IT outsourcing deal with IBM.

Orange's future, however, did not look that bright: the mobile phone group plunged 28p to 584.5p after the Hong Kong giant, Hutchison Whampoa, denied rumours that it was about to sell its stake.

On a happier note, Matellan and Monsoon, the two retailers which came to the market at roughly the same time, enjoyed a buying spree. Matellan, the chain of out-of-town outlets, closed 26p higher to 246p after a good set of interims. Mon-

soon, the trendy retailer of women's frocks with an ethnic feel, rose 10p to 112p as a leap in pre-tax profit overshadowed a less-than-flattering like-for-like sales update.

Hickson, the chemical group, was a star among the minnows, with a glowing set of results sending the shares up 24 per cent to 48.5p.

Brit Allcroft found the rights to Thomas the Tank Engine a bit of a gravy train: the shares steamed ahead 40p to 238.5p after a rise in pre-tax profits and intriguing predictions of a Thomas theme park. There was no such luck for Hampden: the Irish retail group suffered a fall in interim earnings which sent the shares spiralling down. They closed almost 24 per cent off to 57.5p.

Parallel Pictures, the film production company which is preparing a film starring Robert "Full Monty" Carlyle, laid it all bare on its debut on AIM: the shares fell 3.5p to 28.5p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 922.5m
SEAQ TRADES: 74,427
GILTS INDEX: n/a

PRIVATE & Commercial Finance, which specialises in loans for car buyers, lost 2.5p to 62.5p on its debut on AIM. PCF is headed by Tony Nelson, once managing director of McDonnell Douglas Bank, the finance arm of the US aircraft maker. Mr Nelson wants to use PCF's new paper to acquire car finance firms.

CRESTACARE, the nursing homes operator, surprised with the announcement that a suitor, thought to be US-owned Principal Healthcare, had ended talks on a 40p-per-share offer. This came a day after Crestacare confirmed the talks, making it one of the shortest negotiations ever. The shares fell 11 per cent to 31.5p.

IT HAS been a year of two halves for AIM-listed Preston North End, both pretty poor. The football club posted a £1.44m loss (£113,000 profit) due to higher amortisation charges on players. The shares ended flat at 400p.

CMG proves its case on upbeat IT outlook

IF YOU want a gloomy assessment of the prospects for information technology, steer clear of Cor Stutterheim. The chairman of CMG, the Anglo-Dutch computer services group, has been consistently upbeat about the prospects for the IT industry. Yesterday, CMG produced the figures to match his bullish stance.

In the six months to June, CMG managed a 59 per cent jump in pre-tax profits on a 38 per cent increase in revenues. Admittedly some of this came from acquisitions, but CMG's organic growth was still an eye-popping 34 per cent.

What's more, the company was able to soothe worries on almost all the factors IT investors tend to worry about. Staff shortages? Sure, hanging on to skilled staff is tricky, but CMG is tackling this problem by opening up more regional offices, thereby giving workers the chance to move where they want to. Yes, wages are rising but the cost increases are being passed on to customers.

Indeed, CMG even managed to boost its margins by hiring more experienced staff who require less training. As a result, it now makes a 12 per cent return on sales – among the highest in the industry.

As for the year 2000 computer bug and the single European currency, fixing those problems accounts for just 10 per cent of CMG's turnover. And when these areas of business have worked their way through the system in a few years' time there will be new projects, such as electronic commerce and data mining, to keep the company busy.

Meanwhile, Mr Stutterheim is resisting the temptation to rush into expansion with potentially troublesome deals in the US and India. CMG shares soared 10 per cent yesterday, rising 187.5p to 1,862.5p.

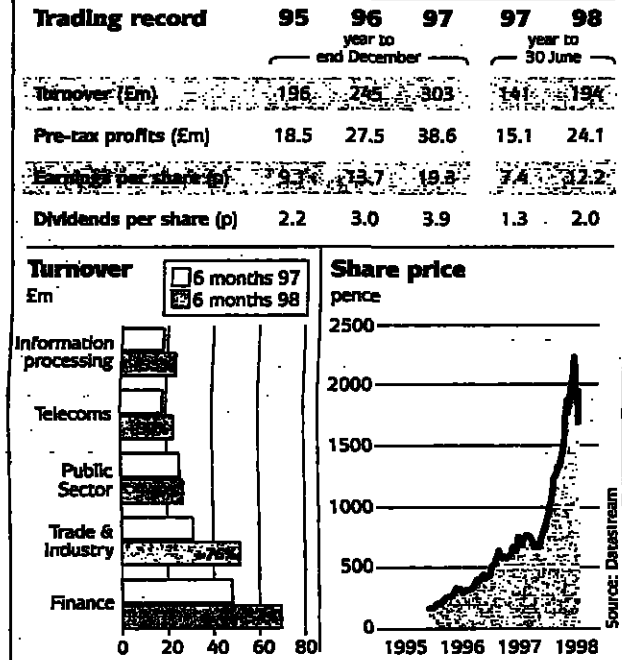
The company remains one of the most solid stocks in the IT industry sector. But, with the shares still changing hands on a multiple of 64 times forecast 1999 earnings, it is hard to see them outperforming.

INVESTMENT

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

CMG: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £2,395m, share price 1862.5p (+187.5p)



Share price pence

Information processing
Telecoms
Public Sector
Trade & Industry
Finance

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SPORT

Lloyd's insensitivity spins out of control

A CONCLUSION reached easily this week is that England's cricket coach, David Lloyd, has improved a talent for embarrassing his employers. Another is that only a severe reprimand will do when Lloyd appears before the authorities at Lord's.

What other response can there be to the insensitivity of remarks that called into question the action of Muttiah Muralitharan, whose 16 wickets at The Oval brought Sri Lanka a first ever Test victory in England?

It was pathetic enough that England continued to patronise Sri Lanka - a country doubtless still referred to in the Long Room as Ceylon; awarding them only one Test - without Lloyd disputing the

legality of their mesmeric off-spinner.

Lloyd, speaking ahead of his appearance before the England and Wales Cricket Board, said yesterday, "I can't go into specifics but this sort of thing is all part of the job."

Really? The impression held here is that Lloyd was hired to bring about advancements in technique and teamwork, not to make a tactic out of controversy.

Unfortunately, these days it becomes more and more difficult to come across any international sports figure who is able to put patriotism into proper perspective.

Success on the fields of play heartens communities and countries, but why does everything have to be so intense?

Reading and listening to the remarks of players, you have to wonder what they were brought up to believe in and what their priorities are. Not long before his 90th birthday last week, Sir Donald Bradman gave a rare interview in which he stated that "sledding" would not have been tolerated under his captaincy. People who played with and against the most prolific run-getter in history leave you in no doubt that Bradman always played hard ball and took every personal advantage. But they speak, too, of his respect for the game's tradition.

Last week, Lloyd's indiscretion was brought into sharper focus when England's captain, Alec Stewart, conceded graciously that his team had been out-played by Sri



KEN JONES

Lanka and Muralitharan was out on his own in the off-spinning department. As for a dodgy action, Muralitharan's has been cleared under the closest scrutiny.

If, as it seems to be, that is not good enough for Lloyd, he should have directed his suspicion through the proper channels. Instead he made a meal of it, bringing down the force of Geoff Boycott's bluntness. The angry exchange of words that then ensued in the television commentary box made Lloyd seem even more ridiculous.

Sadly, it is not an isolated description. Bowlers and fieldsmen make themselves look ridiculous in celebration and with incessant appealing. Batsmen look ridiculous when making it obvious that they are in disagreement with an umpire's decision.

What happened to dignity in sport? As everyone knows, the recent football World Cup finals

were besmirched by cheating. This week, David Ginola of Tottenham admitted that he attempts to con referees into awarding free-kicks.

The publication of Tony Adams' autobiography reveals an aspect of Glenn Hoddle's approach to the World Cup that would have caused no small amount of consternation when the Football Association had a reputation worth speaking about. Hoddle's explanation for choosing Alan Shearer ahead of Adams as England captain was that it increased the possibility of gaining free-kicks.

Two weeks ago Uriah Rennie was commended in this and other prints for showing yellow cards to players, including Shearer and Gianfranco Zola, who attempted to persuade

him that they had been unfairly challenged during the match between Chelsea and Newcastle.

Last week Rennie came under fire from Roy Hodgson and Martin O'Neill, respectively the managers of Blackburn Rovers and Leicester City, after adopting a similar policy.

If anything now goes in sport, a good question is where is sport going? Who is setting the standards anyway? Not the directors of Newcastle, who dumped Kenny Dalglish after only two games of this season. Not Rudi Voller, who put himself in line for the job while Dalglish was still in office.

We had better be aware of what is happening in sport, for it already reveals the sort of attitude that awaits us.

Football: From goggle box to penalty box, TV's latest celebrity is planning to hog the spotlight again in Vilnius

McCoist looks forward to his action replay

BY PHIL GORDON

CRAIG BROWN should really have borrowed the title of Chris Evans' show *Don't Forget Your Toothbrush* when he told Ally McCoist that he would be needed in Vilnius this Saturday. The veteran goalscorer has had such a surprise return to international football that he could have been forgiven for rushing his packing.

McCoist was being measured up to be on the box, rather than in it, this season. His friendship with Evans has turned him into a regular guest of the carrot-headed celebrity. McCoist even had his own chat show in Scotland with comedian Fred MacAulay, as well as supplementing his CV for Equity membership with appearances as a football summariser.

Viewing figures rather than goal totals looked like becoming the stock in trade of the 35-year-old with the winning smile and the personality to match. Failure to make the World Cup finals in June seemed to indicate the final curtain on McCoist's career for Scotland, but if a week is a long time in politics, or even showbiz, then in football it can be another era away.

"I was supposed to be going to London this weekend to summarise on the game for Channel 5," said McCoist, almost unable to appreciate a storyline that even by his fairytale standards appeared to be stretching credibility. "I really can't believe I am here," he added, glancing at the Scotland squad going through a last workout on the Hampden pitch before flying out to Lithuania today for the European Championship qualifying tie.

Football really has been the last thing on the agenda of a man who, over the summer, has had more life-changes than most. Most importantly, his wife Allison gave birth to twin sons Mitchell and Argyle in

June. Then came the discovery that Mitchell had a heart problem that had him on the critical list for a while and needed three operations to correct.

Finally, there was the job change. After 15 years as a Rangers player, McCoist had to learn to stop turning up at Ibrox every day. His contract expired in June and, although there were a number of clubs from Tampa Bay in America's Major League Soccer to Hibernian and Fulham in Britain desperate to offer him a new challenge, McCoist's appetite seemed lost.

Indeed, television loomed large on the horizon and when the striker had

of neglect. In his opening appearance, a cameo as a substitute in the League Cup tie with Livingston, McCoist hit an extra-time winner then, last Sunday, he struck a hat-trick against the Premier League leaders Hearts, conveniently while Craig Brown watched in the stand.

The Scotland manager, given his paucity of resources in attack, which had worsened since France 98 by the injury to Gordon Durie, wasted no time in offering an instant recall to the player he had told just months earlier that he would not be going to the World Cup.

McCoist, though, insists there is no festering resentment with Brown, who is almost certain to give the Kilmarnock striker - that still seems a strange thing to write - his 60th cap on Saturday. "No, I am not angry with Craig," he declared. "It was disappointing and obviously I wanted to go to the World Cup. But I don't hold a grudge - I've proved that by the fact that I am here."

"The world would be a boring place if everyone agreed all the time and obviously Craig's view and mine differed. I still think I should have gone to France because I was scoring a lot of goals for Rangers towards the end of last season."

Brown insists that the difference between McCoist's goals now, in the blue and white stripes of Kilmarnock, compared to those scored in the blue of Rangers, is that they are scored by a fit man. "Ally was not fully fit at the time, he had a calf injury," Brown said.

Walter Smith didn't pick him for the Scottish Cup final with Hearts, which tells its own story, and although Ally came on and scored as a substitute, he just didn't look up to the task. He is a lot sharper now, though, so maybe having a proper rest over the summer has helped."

As McCoist reflects on the issue he insists that he had never written himself off - a wise attitude for a man



Ally McCoist celebrates after scoring one of the three goals for Kilmarnock which earned him his Scotland recall. Allsport

ALLY MCCOIST - THE RECORD

McCoist celebrates one of his 19 goals for Scotland

Born: 24 September 1962.	Europe goals: 18.
Scotland caps: 59.	Rangers appearances: 573.
Scotland goals: 19.	First Rangers goal: v Celtic (3 September 1983).
Rangers goals: 355 (Rangers' all-time record score).	Last Rangers goal: v Hearts, Scottish Cup final (16 May 1998).
League goals: 249.	European Golden Boot: 1991-92.
League Cup goals: 54.	
Scottish Cup goals: 27.	

not found a club by the opening day of the league season it was assumed that he had reconciled himself to talking a good game rather than playing one.

However, his baby son's condition was unknown at that point and it emerged that McCoist was too wrapped up with hospital visits to seal a deal with the Kilmarnock manager Bobby Williamson, his erstwhile striking partner at Ibrox. Williamson's patience paid off, signing McCoist three weeks ago and trying to whip him into shape after a summer

blue of Rangers, is that they are scored by a fit man. "Ally was not fully fit at the time, he had a calf injury," Brown said.

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As McCoist reflects on the issue he insists that he had never written himself off - a wise attitude for a man

who has made a habit of spoiling other people's parties. "I never ruled myself out of international football," he said. "Deep down I wanted to get back in and obviously Craig has felt that getting a regular run for Kilmarnock and scoring goals would help my case."

Yet McCoist is also coming to terms that every game in the dark blue shirt now could be his last. As

his 36th birthday looms, McCoist knows his goals might help his country reach another tournament that he does not figure in.

"Well, others have discovered that in the past," admits Brown. "John McGinlay scored a crucial goal against Sweden that helped us get to the World Cup finals and didn't make the squad, and Duncan Shearer did the same against Finland in

the last European qualifiers and I could not take him to Euro 96. With Ally I will cross that bridge when we come to it."

McCoist is philosophical. "That does not worry me," he declared. "I cannot look any further forward than this game. Realistically, I don't think I will still be around if we do qualify. But, never say never..."

The man who won the Golden

Boot as Europe's best goalscorer in 1992 has still got a few more goals in his locker. Lithuania should also take note that McCoist has a connection to part of the Vilnius stadium he will perform in. "The seats all came from Ibrox originally and were bought by the Lithuanian FA when Rangers revamped their ground," said Brown. "It will be just like Ibrox for Ally!"

Coming up roses on Noades' Brentford farm

RON NOADES' explanation of how he became the manager at Brentford might give the impression he is a man driven by whim and that football clubs are playthings for the well-to-do.

"It's just something I wanted to do," he said yesterday, at a lunch in an upmarket Italian restaurant in London to celebrate being named the Nationwide Third Division Manager of the Month for August. "I got to the point where I thought 'I'm 60 years of age, it's now or never'" he added, as if buying a football club and then deciding to be owner, chairman and team manager were common.

The owner, chairman and now manager of the month harbours ambitions for his West London club. By Nick Harris

To take his comments at face value would be to gloss over his passion for football, his extensive knowledge of the game (he has held an FA coaching badge for more than 20 years) and his shrewdness as a speculator in the industry.

Noades is the man who bought Wimbledon before they were in the league and then sold them. He then

bought Crystal Palace at the start of the 1980s for £600,000 and sold them this summer to the businessman Mark Goldberg for nearly £23m.

"I didn't want to sell Palace but it went for £22.8m, including the ground," he said. "That goes into my holding company's assets, but I've lent Goldberg £2m. Because he couldn't afford to buy the freehold,

I've given him an option on it. So, in the end, Goldberg only came up with enough money to buy the club. I think it was a stupid deal for him to do."

Noades is not stupid. He spent £650,000 on the proceeds from Palace to buy a majority share of Brentford, and in the process made himself the manager, a position he has long sought. "Once you're in [the board room] you're never allowed to get out," he said, relieved to now be in total control. He added he was offered eight clubs - including Manchester City, Portsmouth and Notts County - when he made it known he was in the

market, but he opted for Brentford because "it was available" and because he felt fans at bigger clubs would not have accepted him as manager.

Since taking over, he has presided over a coaching team of three - Ray Lewington, Terry Bullivant and Brian Sparrow - and Brentford have won three of their four league matches and knocked First Division West Bromwich Albion out of the Worthington Cup.

Noades said that although he works "by consensus" with his staff, it is ultimately he who picks the team. "I'm an organiser first and foremost,"

he said. Mistakes will no doubt occur as they did at Palace, where he was closely involved with buying players - including the £1.8m Italian Michele Padovano, who flopped - but, at Brentford, his aim is simple. "I'll do the manager's job as long as I'm enjoying it," he said. "If a new stadium comes, Brentford could be a big club in London," he added, referring to a 25,000-seat multi-purpose ground that has been in the pipeline for some years. "If not, they could just be a farm for bigger clubs."

Noades will not settle for being a farmer, but his latest accolade should also sound a note of caution - the Second Division's Manager of the Month last March was Micky Adams, of Brentford, later to be relegated.



Noades: Divisional accolade

Gamblers caught up by the Net

THERE ARE probably more than a few members of the ocker Club who regard computers as the work of the Devil and the funny thing is, they might be right. As a new millennium approaches, even the 'lub itself' now has a web site, which allows surfers from very corner of the planet to read the latest rulings by the disciplinary committee (there, after all, some very strange people in cyberspace). But a possibility that should excite racing's administrators is that the same technology, could yet begin to undermine the very foundations of the industry.

That statement may one day turn out to have been a wild exaggeration, but then again, the ne certain thing about modern technology is that no-one can predict precisely how, or even how quickly, it will change the world. Nowhere is this more true than on the Web, which already links tens of millions of people around the world and adds thousands more to its extended family every day.

Shopping on the Internet is still in its infancy, but the volume of business which takes place in cyberspace is also rising. Already, for example, British music lovers have started

It's not just for computer nerds. The world-wide-web offers tax-free betting for punters. By Greg Wood

ed to discover that even when postage is taken into account, it can be cheaper to buy CDs online from America than in the local branch of HMV.

If you can shop on the Net, then you can also bet on the Net. Indeed, since it involves no tax, it is a possibility that should excite racing's administrators is that the same technology, could yet begin to undermine the very foundations of the industry.

YORK

HYPERION
2.00 Rymer's Rascal
2.30 Lajuan
3.00 KISMAH (nap)
3.30 Rainbow High

GOING: Good.
STALLS: 55, 61 - stands; 40 - inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.
Left-hand, U-shaped course. Flat and ideal for the powerful gallop.
Course is 1m 5 of city on A102. Not a short course. Country Stand 218 (15-16 year-olds); 219 (17-18); 220 (19-20); 221 (21-22); 222 (23-24); 223 (25-26); 224 (27-28); 225 (29-30); 226 (31-32); 227 (33-34); 228 (35-36); 229 (37-38); 230 (39-40); 231 (41-42); 232 (43-44); 233 (45-46); 234 (47-48); 235 (49-50); 236 (51-52); 237 (53-54); 238 (55-56); 239 (57-58); 240 (59-60); 241 (61-62); 242 (63-64); 243 (65-66); 244 (67-68); 245 (69-70); 246 (71-72); 247 (73-74); 248 (75-76); 249 (77-78); 250 (79-80); 251 (81-82); 252 (83-84); 253 (85-86); 254 (87-88); 255 (89-90); 256 (91-92); 257 (93-94); 258 (95-96); 259 (97-98); 260 (99-100); 261 (101-102); 262 (103-104); 263 (105-106); 264 (107-108); 265 (109-110); 266 (111-112); 267 (113-114); 268 (115-116); 269 (117-118); 270 (119-120); 271 (121-122); 272 (123-124); 273 (125-126); 274 (127-128); 275 (129-130); 276 (131-132); 277 (133-134); 278 (135-136); 279 (137-138); 280 (139-140); 281 (141-142); 282 (143-144); 283 (145-146); 284 (147-148); 285 (149-150); 286 (151-152); 287 (153-154); 288 (155-156); 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1046 (1671-1672); 1047 (1673-1674); 1048 (1675-1676); 1049 (1677-

Surrey feel the title tension

BY JON CULLEY
at Headingley

Yorkshire 250-9 dec Surrey 10-0

AFTER THE frustration of watching rain wash out the opening day here, the Championship leaders Surrey yesterday began to experience the tension of a title race nearing its conclusion as they struggled to gain an advantage.

Presented with a pitch so green it was barely distinguishable from the rest of the square, and with heavy cloud cover, captain Adam Hobbie quite naturally asked Yorkshire to bat on winning the toss. But it soon became clear that the clatter of falling wickets was not going to be a feature as Yorkshire, adopting a policy of minimum risk, made patient progress.

It added up to a day to stretch Surrey's nerves as they strive to win the title 27 years after the Championship pennant last flew over The Oval. Leicestershire cut their lead to 15 points in the last round and failure to win here would leave Surrey vulnerable.

Restored virtually to full strength, Surrey faced a Yorkshire side lacking Darren Lehmann, who has returned to Australia to prepare for the Commonwealth Games, and Darren Gough, who has a hamstring strain. But they found themselves up against stubborn opponents unwilling to sell themselves cheaply.

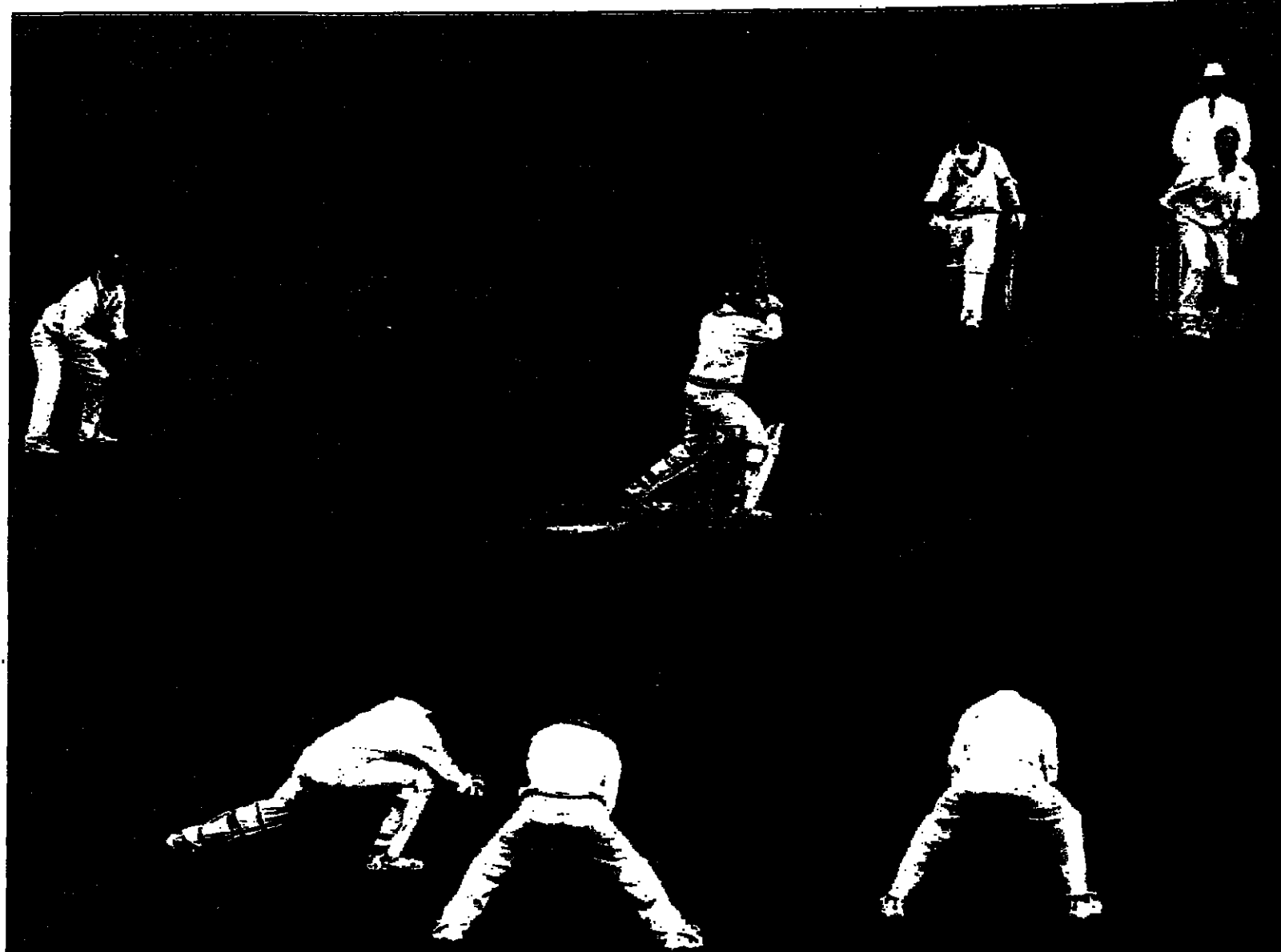
None was more obstructive to their ambitions than Craig White, back in action for the first time in two months after suffering from a persistent back injury. White is not fit enough to bowl but, asked to

open for the first time in a four-day match, proved he is quite comfortable with a bat. White completed his first half-century of the season with his seventh boundary, a handsome cut off Ben Hollis that he immediately repeated. With skipper David Byas, who came in at four, White added 81 in 24 overs to establish a useful platform for his side at 150 for 3 before Hollis gained his revenge as the batsman steered the ball to Ally Brown at slip.

Earlier, Mark Butcher had drawn first blood for Surrey when Michael Vaughan was leg before wicket, shuffling across one that came back. The England captain was the only casualty before lunch but Martin Bicknell, who had bowled well without reward in the morning session, earned a belated success straight after the interval when Matthew Wood fell victim to a high slip catch held by Alec Stewart.

After White's dismissal, 20-year-old Gary Fellows, making his debut, became a second victim for Ben Hollis when he was caught down the leg side by wicketkeeper Jonathan Batty before Byas and Bradley Parker put on 58 for the fifth wicket, the partnership ending when Parker was leg before offering no stroke to Adam Hollis as Surrey claimed their second bonus point in the 87th over.

Byas reached 53 in three hours and 32 minutes before falling leg to a Butcher inswinger as Surrey suddenly gained the upper hand, taking three wickets in 15 balls as Butcher bowled Gavin Hamilton and Richard Blakey chased a ball outside his off-stump.



David Byas of Yorkshire flashes the ball towards the Surrey slip cordon at Headingley yesterday

Mike Hewitt/Allsport

DeFreitas sounds warning

BY DAVE HADFIELD
at Old Trafford

Derbyshire 281
Lancashire 214-2

PHILIP DEFREITAS did his considerable best to slow Lancashire's progress in one competition in the dress rehearsal for the final of another.

Lancashire and Derbyshire meet again on Saturday in the NatWest final at Lord's and DeFreitas gave his present county a psychological boost for that contest with his former employers with the sort of swash-buckling innings that wins one-

day trophies, even if its effect yesterday was to make the County Championship points that Lancashire need rather harder to obtain.

But later in the day John Crawley reached 96 not out to give them a chance of earning the maximum points they need to keep the title race alive.

A match already shoe-horned into the schedule to finish tomorrow afternoon lost the whole of its first day on Tuesday. It was largely thanks to Wasim Akram's wayward opening burst that Derbyshire were able to give such a convincing impression of making up for lost

time. The Lancashire captain's first over yielded 17 runs, including two no-balls and a total of six from one wide that shot between the slips and reached the boundary.

It was Peter Martin, bowling with much more control from the other end, who ended Derby's bright start, removing both openers in consecutive overs, both to catches in the slips.

Martin, celebrating his call up in England's one-day squad, could also have had Matthew Cassar out before scoring, but Graeme Lloyd could not hold a desperately difficult chance at

wide fourth slip. It was a missed opportunity Lancashire were to regret, although they kept Derbyshire's progress in check, with Wasim coming back after his untidy first spell to remove Dominic Cork and Vince Clarke on either side of the lunch interval, both with his trademark toe-crushing yorker.

By then, Cassar was well established, moving to his 50 by pushing Ian Austin away to leg for two and then hammering Gary Keedy for a mighty six. It was to be his last act of aggression, because an adventurous innings ended on 70 in the next over when he was

caught and bowled by Glen Chapple.

That left DeFreitas to hit out cheerfully against his old county, including a big straight six off Austin.

By comparison, Lancashire's start was sedate and in the eighth over of their reply Atherton dragged a ball from DeFreitas onto his stumps. Neil Fairbrother brightened things up with a dashing 48 and Lancashire sustained the momentum, particularly through Crawley who went ahead of Justin Langer as the leading first class run scorer this season.

Sussex slide on seamer's wicket

BY JOHN COLLIS
at Hove

Sussex 332 & 163-9
Glamorgan 353-6 dec

WHEN RAIN arrived from the west to bring play to a halt at 3.40pm a day, which began evenly balanced, had steadily tilted Glamorgan's way. The visitors declared with a token 21-run lead on Tuesday evening in a match where Robert Croft is the only specialist spinner. Sussex's sole regular spin option, Michael Bevan, is with the Australian squad preparing for the Commonwealth Games, and will not return this season, while Glamorgan rightly sensed a seamer's wicket and left out Dean Cosker.

The announcement of four of England's winter squads - the one-day side for Australia and the Under-19s for New Zealand are still to come - brought mixed emotions to Hove. Croft was mightily relieved to make the Ashes party, Jason Lewry and Darren Thomas were bowled over by England A selection, while the Sussex skipper Chris Adams received last prize in the raffle, a place in the eight-a-side Super Max tournament in Perth next month.

The advice of the Sussex management was to go out yesterday and reply with a stack of runs. Alas, this most ebullient of batsmen built just a small stack, as he was in the first innings, but his 47 was as entertaining as ever. Adams received 58 balls either side of lunch, and hit eight boundaries. A one-bounce hook off Andrew Davies clattered into the heavy roller beyond the square fence, and chewed a chunk out of the ball.

Adams fell to a second-slip catch by Cosker, fielding for the wicketkeeper Adrian Shaw who broke a finger on Monday. Shaw, in fact, had to make a brief appearance, fingers taped together, while Thomas sought running repairs for a calf strain. Matthew Maynard donned the emergency gauntlets yesterday and kept neatly conceding just two byes so far.

Although it was Croft who started the Sussex slide by fooling Wasim Khan and Toby Peirce, this remains a game for seam. The Glamorgan quartet - Davies and Thomas, Owen Parkin and Adrian Dale - shared the remaining wickets, with Dale taking a tidy trio to reduce Sussex to 163 for 9 when the drizzle thickened to rain. Dale raced in from the sea and in the steady drizzle to trap James Kirtley leg before with the first ball of his new spell. Nick Wilton was then bowled leg stump for a duck and Robin Martin-Jenkins, who shared a seventh-wicket stand of 96 in eight overs with Kirtley, followed in similar fashion, having taken 46 balls in compiling 30.

There is still time for a Sussex surprise, but it is Glamorgan who now have most reason to hope for a favourable forecast today.

Lively Lewis shows his class Middlesex held up

BY HENRY BLOFIELD
at Edgbaston

Leicestershire 389
Warwickshire 157-6

INDEFATIGABLE is not an adjective one would usually associate with Chris Lewis. Nonetheless when Warwickshire began their innings in mid-afternoon, he bowled 31 overs straight off and took the first four wickets to fall in a spirited if rather expensive spell at a cost of 50 runs.

In this spell he gave one of those irritating glimpses of what just might have been if he had temperamental had ever been in step with his technique.

Jack Birkenshaw, Leicester-

shire's director of cricket, said they wanted to use him in long spells at the start as he no longer came back as he once did.

At 11 Nick Knight, the Warwickshire opener, played forward to a wide one and was caught behind by Paul Nixon. In the same over David Hemp played loosely off the back foot and was caught low in the gully. The score had progressed to 70 before Mark Wagh was caught behind off a lifter and, after a few flashing strokes, Brian Lara padded up to one which cut back and was trapped low.

Later Phil Simmons removed Amar Singh and Tim Munton and at the end of an excellent day for Leicestershire, Warwickshire, with four wickets left,

need 83 to save the follow-on.

Last-wicket partnerships are all the rage these days. There were two of some significance at The Oval during the Test match; on Tuesday the England and Pakistan last-wicket pairs both put on 107 in the Under-19 Test match; now, at Edgbaston, David Millns and Matthew Brimston put on 109 for Leicestershire's last wicket.

They had begun the day at 190 for 6 and maximum bonus points for batting were not then the menu, especially when Ben Smith and Lewis were soon out with the score at 203. But Allan Mulally now joined Millns and put on 77 before the last pair took them to within reach of 400 and to four batting points.

Millns is no mean performer with the bat and now finished one short of his fourth first-class 100. Brimston was the surprise and his 54 not out was the first time he had passed 50.

He drove and cut and played one drive off the back foot through the covers as if he had been doing it all his life. He was dropped at first slip when two and might have been caught at second slip at 51.

Millns is a pugnacious left-hander who loves to hit the ball. He has a good range of strokes profiting now, mainly from drives and cuts. In the end, he felt for a lifter from Ed Gidkins trying to run it to third man and was caught behind after facing 159 balls and hitting 10 fours.

RAIN PREVENTED Middlesex building up a powerful position against Hampshire at Southampton where only one session of play was possible. In the 32 overs that were bowled Hampshire were all out for 311 after resuming at 291 for 9 and in their second innings Middlesex were 105 for 2 with Mike Gatting unbeaten on 33.

Hampshire's first innings lasted only a further four overs in which 20 precious runs were added to reduce the Middlesex first innings lead to 126 as last man Peter Hartley struck two boundaries in an over from spinner Phil Tufnell but, in attempting a third, gave Paul Weekes a catch at mid-off.

Richard Johnson was the

most successful of the Middlesex bowlers, taking 4 for 75, while Tufnell, who has been overlooked for England's winter tour to Australia, had to be content with figures of 2 for 79.

Middlesex were soon in trouble when they began their second innings with David Goodchild having his off-stump knocked out of the ground by Hartley with only 19 on the board.

Richard Kettleborough and Andrew Strauss, who made 63 in the first innings on his county debut, took the score to 41 before Strauss touched Alex Morris to wicket-keeper Adrian Aymes after making only 12.

Zahid Saeed and Kashif Raza led a spirited fightback by

Pakistan against England in the third and final under-19 Test at Chelmsford. The two pace bowlers each claimed four wickets as England were bowled out for 162 in their second innings to leave the tourists a victory target of 227. At the close they were 31 without loss.

A devastating spell by Zahid immediately after lunch enabled Pakistan to gain firm control. In the space of seven deliveries, the left-arm seamer removed Owais Shah, Stephen Peters and Paul Franks. It paved the way for the hostile Kashif to return and bring the innings to a swift conclusion and finish with figures of 4 for 26 from 14.4 overs. Zahid returned 4 for 73.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Britannic Assurance County Championship

Gloucestershire v Northamptonshire

BRISTOL (Day 2 of 4): Northamptonshire (Aps) are eight runs ahead of Gloucestershire (5).
Gloucestershire won toss
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - First innings 128 (Match 6-36)
Gloucestershire - First innings Overnight 150-8 (Linnell 53)
First innings Count

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
A J Wright bow b Taylor	25	0	3	64
R C Russell b Rose	26	0	3	73
M C J Ball c Ripley b Rose	0	0	0	0
J Lewis c Ripley b Taylor	5	0	1	13
A M Smith c Follett b Rose	5	0	1	12
C A Walsh not out	5	0	0	7
Score (64 b6 nb16)	28			
Total (70.5 overs)	310			
Falls: 1-4, 2-12, 3-49, 4-127, 5-132, 6-177, 7-178, 8-191, 9-195.				

Bowling: F A Rose 23.5-8-63-4, J P Taylor 23-7-55-3, D Follett 17-3-48-3, K M Curran 2-0-13-0, J P Brown 5-1-21-0.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - Second innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
R R Montgomery c Alleyne b Smith	2	0	0	7
A J Swann bow b Smith	10	0	1	16
M B Loyd c Russell b Smith	12	0	1	23
A L Penberthy c Ball b Smith	6	0	1	17
D J G Sales bow b Smith	0	0	0	0
K W Curran c Dawson b Walsh	0	0	0	0
J D Ripley b Walsh	17	0	2	27
P J Taylor c Curfitt b Smith	4	0	1	15
F A Rose b Smith	18	0	2	18
D Follett b Walsh	9	0	1	22
J F Brown not out	3	0	0	7
Score (65 b6 nb10)	23			
Total (24.4 overs)	93			
Falls: 1-11, 2-24, 3-44, 4-46, 5-48, 6-48, 7-59, 8-84, 9-92.				

Bowling: C A Walsh 12.4-2-50-4, A M Smith 12-3-32-6, M B Loyd 1-0-1-0, J P Brown 5-1-21-0.

Lancashire v Derbyshire

OLD TRAFFORD (Day 2 of 4): Lancashire (Aps) trail Derbyshire (2) by 116 runs with eight first-innings wickets in hand.

Lancashire won toss

DERBYSHIRE - First innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
K J Barnett c Pinnoff b Martin	28	0	4	34
M R May c Fairbrother b Martin	4	0	1	28

Warwickshire v Leicestershire

EDGBASTON (Day 2 of 4): Warwickshire (Aps) trail Leicestershire (5) by 249 runs with six first-innings wickets in hand.

Leicestershire won toss

LEICESTERSHIRE - First innings Overnight 190-6

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
B F Smith bow b Gidkins	96	0	12	223
C C Lewis bow b Munton	13	0	2	28
D J Millns c Pinnoff b Gidkins	98	0	10	199
A D Mulally c Smith b Brown	26	1	2	53
M T Brimston not out	54	0	7	105
Score (61 b4 w6 nb16)	23			
Total (106.4 overs)	389			
Falls: 1-11, 2-21, 3-47, 4-53, 5-124, 6-177, 7-203, 8-203, 9-280.				

Bowling: E S H Gidkins 30.4-6-124-3, D R Brown 26-1-129-3, T A Munton 29-4-90-4, A P Giff 15-5-25-0, N M K Smith 6-2-16-0.

LEICESTERSHIRE - Second innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
N V Knight c Nason b Lewis	3	0	1	16
M A Wagh c Nason b Lewis	33	0	4	54
D L Kemp c Smith b Lewis	0	0	0	0
B C Lara bow b Lewis	26	0	4	44
A Singh not out	32	1	3	67
D R Brown not out	18	0	3	36
Score (61 b6 nb20)	26			
Total (for 4, 34.5 overs)	140			
Falls: 1-11, 2-13, 3-70, 4-87.				

To bat: R J Pinnoff, A P Giff, N M K Smith, T A Munton, E S H Gidkins.

Bowling: A D Mulally 13-1-56-0, C C Lewis 11-1-50-4, D J Millns 11-22-0, V J Wells 2-5-10-0, M T Brimston 1-0-1-0.

Yorkshire v Surrey

HEADINGLEY (Day 2 of 4): Yorkshire (2pts) have scored 290 for 9 against Surrey (4).

Surrey won toss

YORKSHIRE - First innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
C White c Brown b C Hollis	55	0	8	177
M P Vaughan bow b Butcher	22	0	4	63
M J Wood c Stanger b Bicknell	15	0	1	31
D Byas bow b Butcher	52	0	5	156
G M Fellows c Batty b C Hollis	10	0	1	13
G M Hamilton b Butcher	10	0	2	23
C E M Silverwood not out	7	0	8	1
M J Hoggard c Bicknell b Butcher	7	0	1	15
P M Hinchinson not out	0	0	0	0
Score (66 b12 w6 nb20)	46			
Total (for 9 dec, 95.4 overs)	290			

Warwickshire v Leicestershire

EDGBASTON (Day 2 of 4): Warwickshire (Aps) trail Leicestershire (5) by 249 runs with six first-innings wickets in hand.

Leicestershire won toss

LEICESTERSHIRE - First innings Overnight 190-6

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
B F Smith bow b Gidkins	96	0	12	223
C C Lewis bow b Munton	13	0	2	28
D J Millns c Pinnoff b Gidkins	98	0	10	199
A D Mulally c Smith b Brown	26	1	2	53
M T Brimston not out	54	0	7	105
Score (61 b4 w6 nb16)	23			
Total (106.4 overs)	389			
Falls: 1-11, 2-21, 3-47, 4-53, 5-124, 6-177, 7-203, 8-203, 9-280.				

Bowling: E S H Gidkins 30.4-6-124-3, D R Brown 26-1-129-3, T A Munton 29-4-90-4, A P Giff 15-5-25-0, N M K Smith 6-2-16-0.

LEICESTERSHIRE - Second innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
N V Knight c Nason b Lewis	3	0	1	16
M A Wagh c Nason b Lewis	33	0	4	54
D L Kemp c Smith b Lewis	0	0	0	0
B C Lara bow b Lewis	26	0	4	44
A Singh not out	32	1	3	67
D R Brown not out	18	0	3	36
Score (61 b6 nb20)	26			
Total (for 4, 34.5 overs)	140			
Falls: 1-11, 2-13, 3-70, 4-87.				

To bat: R J Pinnoff, A P Giff, N M K Smith, T A Munton, E S H Gidkins.

Bowling: A D Mulally 13-1-56-0, C C Lewis 11-1-50-4, D J Millns 11-22-0, V J Wells 2-5-10-0, M T Brimston 1-0-1-0.

Yorkshire v Surrey

HEADINGLEY (Day 2 of 4): Yorkshire (2pts) have scored 290 for 9 against Surrey (4).

Surrey won toss

YORKSHIRE - First innings

	Runs	As	Bs	Mn
C White c Brown b C Hollis	55	0	8	177
M P Vaughan bow b Butcher	22	0	4	63
M J Wood c Stanger b Bicknell	15	0	1	31
D Byas bow b Butcher	52	0	5	156
G M Fellows c Batty b C Hollis	10	0	1	13
G M Hamilton b Butcher	10	0	2	23
C E M Silverwood not out	7	0	8	1
M J Hoggard c Bicknell b Butcher	7	0	1	15
P M Hinchinson not out	0	0	0	0
Score (66 b12 w6 nb20)	46			
Total (for 9 dec, 95.4 overs)	290			

Hampshire v Middlesex

SOUTHAMPTON (Day 3 of 4): Middlesex (Aps) trail Hampshire (5) by 231 runs with eight second-innings wickets in hand.

Hampshire won toss

MIDDLESEX - First innings Overnight 337 (Strauss 83, Gatting 77, Kettleborough 60, Brown 53)

Hampshire won toss
MIDDLESEX — First Innings 437 (Strauss 83, Gat 77, Kettleborough 60, Brown 53)
HAMPSHIRE — First Innings Overnight 291-9 (W 106, Mascarenhas 63, Johnson 4-72)

Dallaglio facing an extended lay-off

RUGBY UNION
BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

AS RUGBY continues to trip, stumble and sprawl into the new season this weekend, two prominent players will definitely not be in the starting line-ups of their respective clubs. Lawrence Dallaglio and Francois Pienaar will have an extended and unwelcome break from the action, whether it is sanctioned or otherwise.

Dallaglio, the sometime England captain, not only misses Wasp's first Allied Dunbar Premiership game away to Bath, but more ominously for his club and his country, further fixtures. Dallaglio, 26, deliberately stayed at home when England went on their ill-fated tour to the Southern Hemisphere, ceding his captaincy to Northampton's Matt Dawson in order to rest a chronic shoulder problem.

His last match was the cup final in early May. The England back row forward had given no hint of his problems but yesterday Nigel Melville, Wasp's Director of Rugby, said: "Lawrence has not yet started contact work in training and will miss our opening fixtures."

Coincidentally Pienaar, player-coach of Wasp's cup conquerors Saracens, could be out for a similar length of time. He has just undergone arthroscopy on his left knee which means he is ruled out of his side's home match against Northampton. The former Springbok captain said yesterday: "I needed knee surgery on a minor knee problem and I will not be in action until later in the month."

Meanwhile, the Rugby Football Union's latest order to Blunderland was a cross attempt to gag referees after matches. Nick Bunting, the RFU's National Referee Development Officer, pronounced an edict that, judging by the stunned looks on the faces of Twickenham officials, came from the blinds.

The RFU does not want referees to express opinions or make comments about games in unguarded moments in public and they will be prevented from doing so. After Bunting's pronouncement there was an immediate climbdown with Twickenham saying that they would publish the reasons for players having been assigned to the sin bin during a match, a new initiative which starts this week.

But there will be no possibility of a referee making a comment about a specific controversial incident in a game in which he has officiated, not even to provide the attendant media with a factual explanation, which will expose referees to the potential of unfair criticism based on inaccurate assessments.



Dallaglio: No contact

England's Chris Sheasby is confident his team can win gold at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur later this month. "This group of players are brimming under the lid ready to boil over," he said yesterday.

Sparring over Spa incident heats up

MOTOR RACING
BY DERICK ALLSOP

FERRARI AND McLaren-Mercedes issued conflicting communiqués yesterday as the controversy over the Spa incident developed into a strategic cold war.

As Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard began preparations for the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on Sunday week, their teams were again professing they were not to blame for the collision that cost the German the championship lead and so incensed him he accused the Scot of trying to kill him.

Ferrari were first off the grid with a new statement, followed later by McLaren's rejoinder. Schumacher had already called on Coulthard to agree a peace pact, and now the British team have invited their counterparts to a private meeting to end the public wrangling.

The stewards threw out Ferrari's protest but the Italians are clearly intent on sustaining the pressure in the build-up to this crucial race, which McLaren's Mika Hakkinen starts with a seven-point advantage.

McLaren are conscious they face an angry backlash - fears confirmed yesterday when the 27-year-old Scot was met with banners saying "Coulthard Killer" and "Licensed To Kill By Mercedes" while testing at Monza - and are planning their security measures. A public accord of some sort with Ferrari would make life more comfortable for them.

Ferrari stated: "After some misleading interpretations of the dangerous accident with David Coulthard's McLaren, which led to the elimination of Michael Schumacher's Ferrari from the Belgian Grand Prix, Ferrari has once again examined all the various film and photographic evidence from the Grand Prix in Belgium. This shows without doubt that:

"1. For almost an entire lap, Coulthard ignored the blue flags and never gave way to Schumacher, even though he had several opportunities to do so, as required by the rules.

"2. On several occasions Michael Schumacher moved off line to show Coulthard his car was there, before maintaining the correct gap between them, as former Formula One driver Ivan Capelli said in his live broadcast on RAI (an Italian TV station).

"3. Coulthard's sudden deceleration, while on the racing line, was sudden and before he needed to do so. Given the poor visibility, the accident was unavoidable, despite Schumacher making every effort to do so.

"Ferrari will make no further statement about what happened and considers the incident closed. We now look forward to a return to a climate of good relationships between the teams."

McLaren replied: "It was understandable that immediately following this incident emotions were running high and incorrect conclusions reached. It is our regret this incident occurred and that its subsequent interpretation by Ferrari has challenged the integrity of our team and driver.

It is clear the incident was accidental and a consequence of the actions of both drivers involved who were competing in appalling weather conditions.

"At no time leading to the incident did David Coulthard apply the brakes or lift from the throttle, he was merely driving in a manner which would allow Michael Schumacher to pass. The stewards concluded the accident was a racing incident.

"We wish to continue to compete in a sporting manner and not become involved in a protracted public discussion with Ferrari on the incident but extend an invitation to discuss the matter further in private if there is a wish to do so."

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A model of the new Commonwealth Games stadium, which could replace Maine Road as Manchester City's home in the new Millennium

City consider move to £99m stadium

COMMONWEALTH GAMES
BY GUY HODGSON

MANCHESTER CITY, whose Moss side address does not fit easily with their aspirations to restore their status as a 'big' club, will move to the new £99m Commonwealth Games stadium in the east of the city for the 2003-2004 season if approval is gained by supporters and shareholders.

The scheme was given the thumbs up in principle yesterday after it was announced extra funding will be provided by the Sports Council and Manchester City Council, which removes doubts about the viability of the stadium. Construction work will begin next year with a completion date set for late 2001.

There had been fears that the 48,000-seater construction, which will be the centrepiece of the 2002 Games, would have to be a temporary nature because the £60m granted as part of £80m in Sports Council lottery funding in 1996 was inadequate. Now an extra £30.5m has been provided.

City have been mulling over a move to the new stadium, which is a mile from the city centre, since 1986 but could not commit themselves until yesterday's announcement. Now they will consult their audience via supporters' clubs and leaflets at the home match against Bournemouth before deciding whether to leave Maine Road, their home of 75 years.

"Two matters should be emphasised," David Bernstein, the chairman of the Second Division club, said. "First is that we could only move to this stadium if it is an exciting and proper long-term home for our club with facilities that can take Manchester City into the new century. Secondly, legally binding agreements have to be finalised and clearly, before a final decision is made, we are committed to consulting our supporters."

"If our fans don't want to move into the new stadium then we won't go, it's as simple as that. But for my part as chairman and long standing supporter I believe this is a unique opportunity for the club."

In addition to the extra funding, it was announced the local authority intends to develop a sports complex on the 146-acre Eastlands site, which will include an indoor tennis centre and a sports academy, with a gymnasium and injury clinic.

Added to the nearby velodrome, which has become the home of British cycling, Eastlands will become, in the words of Manchester City Council leader, Richard Leese, "the biggest sporting development Europe has ever seen."

He continued: "The key objective is to transform this neglected area into an attractive place in which to live and a magnetic place in which to invest."

City, the football club, have been a neglected area in terms of honours for more than 20 years and are currently in the lowest position they have held in the Football League. They would move into the stadium nine months after the Games and take over management of the ground immediately Maine Road, meanwhile, would be handed over to the council in exchange with neither party receiving any money.

There has been a Football League club in that part of Manchester before. Newton Heath Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway FC played in the 1890s before financial problems and threatened bankruptcy caused it to rename and ultimately relocate. It is now called Manchester United.

Edwards to miss World Cup Faldo to play for Cup place

ATHLETICS

JONATHAN EDWARDS has been ruled out of the World Cup in South Africa later this month.

The triple-jump star withdrew from last Friday's Brussels Golden League meeting when the ankle injury that has been troubling him all year became unbearable even after a pain-killing injection. He has now decided not to compete again this season.

Edwards will lose more than £50,000 for missing this Saturday's IAAF Grand Prix Final in Moscow and the World Cup. But the newly crowned European champion is determined to have immediate surgery on his injured left ankle.

Edwards said: "The selectors were keen for me to jump as they felt it would make a difference between a maximum eight points or possibly just one. But I tried to train and I just couldn't put any weight on my foot."

"I hoped I might get one more competition before the end of the season. When I got back from Brussels, I felt slightly better. But this convinced me it is just not possible."

Now Edwards is hoping to have a keyhole operation in Switzerland next week performed by Roland Biedert, who resurrected the careers of Roger Black and Sally Gunnell. He becomes the third high-profile athlete to withdraw from the British team for the World Cup. The European 200m champion Douglas Walker withdrew through injury while the 400m runner Mark Richardson pulled out to concentrate on the Commonwealth Games.

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GOLF

NICK FALDO said yesterday he aims to play both the United States and European Tours next year in an attempt to win a Ryder Cup place. "It's a lot of golf and a long season but the goal is to make the [European] team as quickly as possible and then decide what to do after that," he said.

Faldo, who has endured a prolonged lean spell on the US Tour this year, lines up in the European Masters search in Crans-sur-Sierre in search of his lost form and Ryder Cup points. He has been Europe's most successful player in his record 11 consecutive appearances in the biennial event. However, the 41-year-old, winner of six majors, is well aware that he can no longer be guaranteed a place in the European team as a wild card.

Europe defend the 1999 Ryder Cup against the US at the Country Club, in Brookline, Massachusetts. The Masters launches Europe's Ryder Cup points campaign and Faldo's initial target is the 133,000 points on offer to the winner at Crans-sur-Sierre. He has also committed himself to four of the remaining seven events on the European calendar this season.

Woodhall sets sights on £1m Calzaghe fight

BOXING

RICHIE WOODHALL, the WBC world super-middleweight champion, wants at least £1m to fight the WBO title holder, Joe Calzaghe, in an all-British showdown.

Woodhall makes the first defence of his title against Bristol's British middleweight champion, Glenn Catley, in Telford on Saturday, but knows that the big money will come from a clash with the Welshman, Calzaghe. "That fight should be worth a million to each of us," said Woodhall. "That is what Calzaghe will also be thinking. It is at the back of my mind and is what I have got to be aiming for in the future. I have always said that I want to be a world champion and a millionaire in the process."

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SPORT

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African
striker
is Smith
target

FOOTBALL

BY ALAN NIXON

THE EVERTON manager Walter Smith is attempting to address his new club's lack of goals by moving for the African striker Ibrahim Bakayoko in a £4.5m deal - before selling his captain, Duncan Ferguson.

Smith was last night trying to push through the deal under the noses of Arsenal, who had the Ivory Coast-born player on trial prior to the season. Bakayoko could arrive at Goodison from the French club, Montpellier, before the end of the week for talks and a medical.

Fast and strong, Bakayoko - just 21 - would be an ideal younger and cheaper alternative to Ferguson, who is a target for Middlesbrough, Aston Villa and Rangers. Smith would sell Ferguson for £10m, with Middlesbrough having their latest £2m offer rejected at the weekend. That would leave Smith funds to buy a second striker.

Bakayoko is highly rated in France, where he was Montpellier's leading scorer, but the club have now decided to sell. Arsenal had been considering a move for Bakayoko after he trained with them, but there were problems about the fee and obtaining a work permit.

However, Bakayoko would have a better chance of staying in the Everton team and keeping his status, although he is also looking into the possibility of gaining an EU passport by becoming French.

Bolton are poised to sign the right winger Marco Nappi from Genoa. The Italian turned out for Wanderers' reserves last night and could secure a contract in the next few days.

Charlton have put the striker Bradley Allen and defender Stuart Palmer on the transfer list. The club's manager, Alan Curtisley, said both players were "at a stage in their careers when they need to be playing first-team football".

The Liverpool defender Mark Wright is retiring from the game after failing to shrug off a persistent back injury. The 35-year-old, who won 45 England caps and made more than 600 senior appearances with Oxford United, Southampton, Derby and the Anfield club, has been out of action for almost a year.

Super League latest, page 23



Tim Henman, the British No 2, shows admirable composure while returning a forehand to Scott Draper, overcoming the Australian in straight sets at the US Open yesterday

AFP

Henman drifts past Draper

BY JOHN ROBERTS
in New York

TIM HENMAN joined Greg Rusedski in the second round of the United States Open yesterday with a straight-sets win against Scott Draper, the Australian left-hander who defeated Pat Rafter en route to winning the Stella Artois at London's Queen's Club the week before Wimbledon.

The British No 2 came off the court to discover that Petr Korda, his projected fourth-round opponent, was out of the tournament. Korda, the Australian Open champion, seeded No 4, lost his opening match against Bernd Karbacher, a German qualifier, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-1.

Henman, the No 13 seed, displaying admirable composure for most of the match, though occasionally he had problems with his first serve before securing victory, 6-3, 7-6, 7-6. He

had to save two set points in the second set and was under pressure at the start of the third, when Draper had two chances to break.

Early in the match it seemed that it might be one of those days when Henman was to suffer from missed opportunities. He needed six break points to crack Draper's serve in the opening set, two of them in the first game.

After breaking for 3-1, Henman took the set in only 28 minutes. In the second set he broke Draper when the Australian served for the set at 5-4 and went on to take the tie-break, 7-4. Henman saved two break points at the start of the third set, settling his game and winning the tie-break, 7-3.

Rafter, in common with Rusedski, came close to following last year's appearance in the US Open men's singles final with elimination in the first round. The defending champ-

on, like Rusedski, battled through in five sets.

The lasting impression of Rafter's win against Hicham Arazi, 4-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, 6-1, however, was the fragility of the Moroccan's temperament compared with the brilliance of his talent. Not for the first time, Arazi failed to do himself justice.

While Rafter deserves enormous credit for salvaging the match after being dazed by his opponent in the opening two sets, Arazi's frailty helped turn the contest in the Australian's favour after showing signs of losing his nerve when two break points were there for the taking at 3-3 in the third set.

After that, Arazi's petulance over some debatable line calls might have resulted in disqualification by an umpire less lenient than the American Norm Cryst, and only provided extra fuel for Rafter's comeback.

The umpire's tolerance contributed to the situation. He should at least have told Arazi to play the game or leave the court as the Moroccan, aside from breaking rackets, taunted Cryst with sarcasm.

Arazi also tried Rafter's patience as the athletic Australian strove to avoid becoming the first defending US men's singles champion in the open era to lose in the first round.

"A few things agitated me on the court," Rafter said. "I didn't appreciate the way he moved around on my serve on big points. I didn't think that was really cool. And it made me upset when he went on and on about line calls. He really let it get to him. The first one just got the outside of the line. He had a bit of a bad break there, but it was a 50-50 call. From then on every other decision was correct. He got me fired up. I wanted to really beat him up then."

Arazi said he did not regret anything, which is a pity. He will have to exercise greater control over his negative emotions if he is to make the most of his gifts.

"I lost concentration because of those mistakes of the umpire," Arazi said. "I was a little bit angry. They were important points and could have given me the break to finish the match. But then Rafter started to get more confident, and it was hard to stop him."

Rafter, in common with the speculators, could not help but admire Arazi's play in the first two sets, when the Australian was given little option but to watch the ball go by. "I got pretty well outplayed," Rafter said. "He played me very smart. He mixed it up very well on his serve. Everything he was doing was just breaking me down. He had chances in the third set. He didn't take them. I took a bit of a risk on one point and

picked the right way for the volley. Then all of a sudden I am up 5-3, serving for the set. Once I won that third set I was feeling pretty confident. From then on he never had another look in."

In the women's singles, the 18-year-old American Venus Williams, who lost to Martina Hingis in last year's final, enjoyed a comfortable start, defeating Germany's Elena Agner, 6-1, 6-0, after only 49 minutes.

David Lloyd, announcing the British Davis Cup squad here for the World Group promotion play-off against India at Nottingham from 25 to 27 September, has brought in Miles MacLagan, a 24-year-old who was born in Zimbabwe of Scottish parentage. The South African-born doubles specialist, Chris Broad, is also included, along with Hampshire's Chris Wilkinson. They are the supporting cast to Rusedski and Henman.

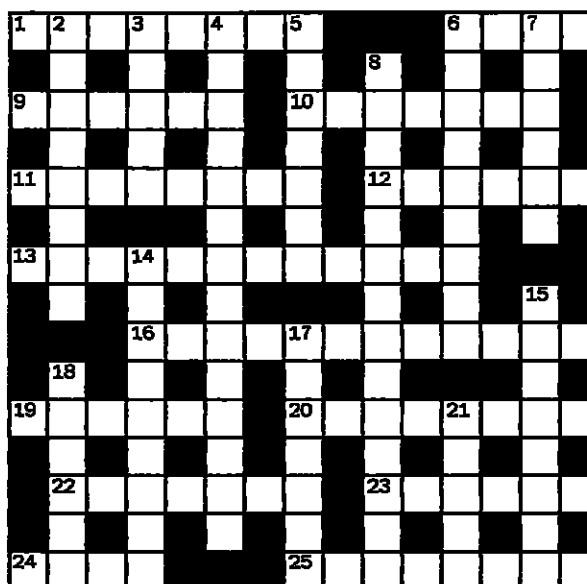
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THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No. 3786, Thursday 3 September

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



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ACROSS

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6 Guzzle in bar (4)
9 Equine disease, see, occurring in European country (6)
10 Birdsong, trilling sound, rising (7)
11 Jelly, before do (8)
12 Bank on Queen being the one on the deck (6)
13 Perfectly capable of having a flutter (5-7)
16 Vehicle, monster, to be tested outside compound (12)
19 Some of the busiest actors rest (6)
20 Reputation of a hog scoffing leftovers with

DOWN

- 2 Leg bowler's delivery led to collapse (7)
3 Sign of pressure? None in island pub (6)
4 Holds back, retaining Heart - King (4)
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7 What's in store for pommie? RU, maybe (8)
8 Wine, uncapped, gushes over (5)
9 You'd expect them to work at netting (6-8)
5 Release concealed energy (7)
6 He needs skill during a

spree (9)

- 7 Left a quiet animal in fold (6)
8 Fool reduced egg nice lorry to a banger (14)
14 Just the type to make Yale (9)
15 Rust? Silver, new, is in condition (8)
17 Harry gets work with mill (7)
18 Clothes child in garish things (6)
21 Ultimately caught thrashing fish (5)

Britain aims to take
lead in war on drugs

BY STEVEN DOWNES

TWO OF Britain's top sports could lead the world in the fight against drug abuse by introducing compulsory blood testing. Officials from cycling and athletics are considering the move, which would revolutionise doping controls by making possible the identification of previously undetectable substances.

Such an initiative would enhance the public reputations of the two sports, which have been sullied by allegations of widespread drug-taking, and could also act as a spur to the international governing bodies.

While the introduction of worldwide sporting blood tests has been debated for nearly a decade, international bodies are no closer to introducing the policy.

As was shown during the Tour de France, where drug tests failed to detect users but raids by police and customs uncovered widespread possession of banned substances, current doping control procedures are inadequate for catching cheats.

Two performance-enhancing substances - human growth hormone (HGH) and erythropoietin (EPO) - are now believed to be in widespread use. They are undetectable under conventional urine drug tests.

Growth hormone has an anabolic, body-building effect on the body, allowing a competitor to do more heavy training, or to recover more quickly from injury. EPO enhances the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood, thereby improving perfor-

mance in endurance events.

At last month's European athletics championships in Budapest Jon Brown, after finishing fourth for Britain in the 10,000m final, made accusations of EPO use against some of his rivals. "Until the authorities introduce blood testing," Brown said, "there's nothing I can do."

Dave Moorcroft, who heads the governing body for British athletics, has already had talks about the possibility of introducing blood testing in British athletics - initially, at least, in a limited form.

"If EPO is a problem, it is clearly one we need to address," he said. "It is a hugely complicated issue. But we must explore the possibility of introducing random and voluntary blood tests - even if it is only initially in the form of research."

Research work has been conducted on blood testing over the past four years at London's St Thomas's Hospital and laboratories in Norway, Canada, France and the United States. Some of the research labs have published papers which suggest that just a few drops of blood - taken from a pin prick to the finger or earlobe - is enough for an effective test for HGH and EPO.

Without international sanction, no British sports body could unilaterally introduce blood tests on visiting overseas competitors.

Indeed, the organiser of one of the country's largest sports events said: "If I introduced blood testing as a condition of entering my event, I'd end up with nobody in the field."

However, blood testing on British competitors within Britain could give a lead. Certainly it is on the agenda of the British Cycling Federation, as it begins an overall review of drug testing under its jurisdiction.

Brian Cookson, the BCF president, said last night: "We want to be at the leading edge of these matters." Saying he had been "appalled and dismayed" by the events surrounding this year's Tour de France, Cookson said he intends to call for tougher doping control measures - including blood tests - at a conference to be staged by the international cycling body, the UCI, in the Netherlands next month.

"This country is probably not the nub of the problem as far as EPO use is concerned," Cookson said, suggesting that while some British cyclists may have used drugs, the high cost of EPO put it out of the reach of anyone not part of one of the top continental professional teams.

"But we would consider anything that would help provided we had the support and backing of the UK Sports Council and it is a scientifically sustainable technique," Cookson said.

"I'm keen to see blood samples introduced, so that we can test for a range of drugs, not just EPO and growth hormones, because with blood tests you get better, more accurate results than is possible with urine analysis, and you are able to detect the use of masking agents, which many people suspect are in use by steroid

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THURSDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Brian Harris

Taiwan with tea-shops

THE woman in one of Worthing's local information offices chewed her lip thoughtfully and looked totally baffled, as if someone had just posed the most cryptic of cross-word clues.

"Here, you say? Worthing? The most prosperous town in Britain? Long pause. "Are you sure you don't mean Hove? I don't know what to say. I'm surprised, I suppose. Yes, surprised."

She's not the only one. While Brighton enjoys a certain louche status epitomised by Keith Waterhouse's observation that it looks like "a town helping the police with their inquiries", poor old Worthing, you feel, would never arouse such suspicion - or interest. Until now, that is. This week Brighton's goody-two-shoes relative has suddenly shot into the limelight, after a report rating it as the most profitable town in Britain.

This is some transformation, for a place that barely gets a mention in most guidebooks on Britain. Both Lonely Planet and Rough Guide appear to overlook this centre of commerce, while the *Good Guide* to Britain awards it a terse mention: "restrained but rather charming town with a pleasant sea front in the same mould as Brighton but altogether quieter and less gaudy". Brighton but altogether quieter and less gaudy? The damning with faint praise indeed. Perhaps the town's most famous claim to fame is a mention by Oscar Wilde, who was thought to have written *The Importance of Being Earnest* while staying there. At any rate, it seems that Worthing's potential has been seriously underestimated.

This genteel resort is also in the news for being one of the luckiest places in Britain. Worthing, nicknamed "Guards' Waiting-Room", has just recorded its seventh lottery jackpot winner - Brian and Karen Hopcroft, fish and chip shop managers. "It could be us" reads the headline in *The Argus*, Worthing's local paper, above the couple's jubilant photograph.

Experian, the global information group, analysed the profits of 200,000 companies in England, Wales and Scotland and measured firms' profits against sales. They found that successful areas had excellent communication and transport links, a high number of skilled workers and a well established manufacturing base. The figures also show that businesses in Worthing enjoy an average profit margin of 20.9 per cent. London, in comparison, manages a measly 5.27 per

The figures are indisputable. Worthing topped a survey this week as Britain's most booming town. But shouldn't someone tell the residents?

BY EMMA COOK



cent. Worthing's buoyant figures really reflect the businesses that have invested here: the Dawood Motor Company, SmithKline Beecham Pharmaceuticals, and Griffin Credit Services. There has also been a 10,000 increase in the number of people of working age living in the town, and another 4,000 are expected to move in over the next five years.

Chris Sargent, chairman of the Economic Development and Planning Council, views these figures as evidence of a significant demographic shift in Worthing's population. At one time, Worthing had the largest over-65 population in Britain. But no longer, enthuses Mr Sargent.

"A lot of younger people are moving to the town. It's quite a place now. In fact we've got more young people here than in any other town in West Sussex. It annoys me that the media look on it as an old people's town. It's changed."

Old people, it seems, aren't so much part of the vision for this new, shiny hi-tech centre of commerce. Young people, young "professionals" in particular, are part and parcel of New Wor-

thing's 21st-century image. One information officer tells me brightly: "It's not a sleepy place at all. It used to be called the 'Costa Geriatrics', but not any more."

Opposite Worthing's Pavilion, Richard John, a businessman, owns three hair and beauty salons. He is expanding rapidly, and has bought several other shops in the area.

"I now employ 55 people," he says. "It was just me and a shampooer. What's happening, I think, is a change of attitude. New companies have moved in, with young families."

So there's not much demand for blue rinses, then? He looks vaguely appalled by the idea. "Blue rinses? Ooh no, certainly not. We offer high quality that people like paying for," he says firmly, despite the fact that there are enough old people walking past his shop to keep him shampooing non-stop for a week. But that's not the sort of clientele that interests him.

Which leaves you wondering whether Worthing is a town in serious denial - or at least suffering from a split personality. Milton Keynes

aspirations with Bournemouth demographics. And while the more entrepreneurial residents boast of an influx of lively young things and a dwindling elderly population, 20 minutes in the town centre confirms the exact opposite. In this light, reports of a new tiger economy seem a little far-fetched - more enthusiastic Labrador, maybe. Elderly couples stroll along the sea front past the sedate-looking ice-cream parlours and the pavilion, where you can catch an afternoon tea dance or watch Hinge and Bracket. They sit around on benches and in tea rooms, making the most of the mild weather before the season draws to an end.

"I've never noticed that this town is prosperous," says Elsie, 70, out with two friends. "They come in, spend their money and then go back again." Her friend, Pam, chips in: "If you ask me, the place has lost a lot in the last few years, with all those new-fangled shopping centres and the smaller shops going. It's taken the character away."

Further along the seafront, at Worthing's equivalent to Brighton's "Grand", Lillian and Sylvia, in their seventies, are settling down to some sewing over a morning coffee. "It feels welcoming here, but not particularly wealthy," says Sylvia. Lillian agrees. "I like it because it's so quiet. Not like Brighton - I hate that place."

The real challenge, it seems, is to locate Worthing's flourishing younger population - which is supposedly breathing new energy into an old resort. After a fairly arduous hunt, it becomes clear that they are pretty thin on the ground. Louisa and Stacey, both 18 and at college, stick out like sore thumbs in one of Worthing's seafront pubs - chiefly because they're under 60 years old.

"There's not a lot to do, clubbing-wise," admits Louisa. "You tend to go to Brighton for that. There is money around, definitely. But it doesn't go to the right things."

Stacey agrees: "There's more for the elderly lot. And they get irritated by the noise, so clubs have to close down earlier."

Profitability may be soaring, but it looks as though it will take some time for the rest of the town to fulfil such a lucrative reputation. No need for Brighton to start sweating just yet.

"It would be nice if there were more for young people to do," says Louisa wistfully. "Still, there's always the National Lottery."

CHRISTMAS IN LAPLAND

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity

Risking epidemics

Sir: As a GP with responsibility for child health, I read with concern your leading article (1 September) about measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine and parents' right to choose.

Since the paper suggesting a link between MMR and autism was published in *The Lancet* earlier this year there has been a significant reduction in the uptake of vaccines in general, and particularly of MMR. In my practice population the uptake is as low as 75 per cent. To prevent epidemics of an illness we need approximately 90 per cent of children immunised. Clearly my area is at risk of an epidemic. I believe that irresponsible media reporting is responsible for this.

The decline in immunisation is among the "chattering classes". They do not have the benefit of assessing the paper themselves, but rely on the reporting of medical information by people such as yourselves. The paper has since been severely criticised by peer review. Also, the "advice" to have the vaccines separately was made as a suggestion by only one of the paper's authors.

I feel that the implication that Department of Health guidelines in favour of MMR are based on financial indications alone is misguided. Giving the vaccines individually over three years delays a child's chance of being protected. Having to undergo six injections rather than two means three times the risk of a reaction such as a fever.

Although I fully support a parent's right to choose, the choice should be based on full information.

SARAH MACDERMOTT
Leeds

Russia's 'friends'

Sir: Ken Livingstone tells us (Comment, 2 September) that the West's urging of Russia onto the path of free market extremism in the early Nineties was a deliberate plot to weaken that country permanently, and get the West's hands on cheap oil and gas.

He does not reveal how he discovered this conspiracy. But it flies in the face of the basic psychology of the situation.

The western leaders really believed (and still do) in free markets as the solution to everything. The only things they were ever going to recommend, in any country and situation, were more deregulation, privatisation, movement of capital and, in general, the opposite ideological extreme to Communism.

We certainly need dissenting voices while our leaders offer a spot more half-hearted help to the Russians on condition they renege on their promises to the same policies that created the situation. But to talk in terms of great satanic conspiracies ruins the case, and merely reminds us of the equally dubious mind-set of the old left.

Dr ROGER SCHAFIR
London N21

Wheels vs feet

Sir: Darius Sanai's article on the "warfare" between different road users (1 September) brings to mind experiments where rats competing for scarce resources (in this case road space) quickly display symptoms of stress, aggression and violence.

Be under no illusion, however. Motorists have been the overwhelming winners in the rat-race created by post-war transport policy. This is not to imply that motorists are more rat-like than other road users. Most are also pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers. But for decades, transport planners have consistently given priority to people travelling in cars when allocating road space, time and money.

John Prescott's transport White Paper made a commitment to changing this allocation, by shifting some of these resources from private cars to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. Wider

pavements, more bus and cycle lanes, better pedestrian crossings and new pedestrian priority areas should be the result. Recent research suggests such measures could lead to traffic "evaporation" rather than gridlock.

As this reallocation takes place, however, it is vital to remember that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are not identical, even though both have much to gain from traffic reduction. Poorly designed "shared use" routes (such as white lines on pavements) benefit neither group. Walkers need proper pavements, free of all vehicles. Cyclists need safe tracks, in the carriageway or, physically separated from pedestrians, across parks and commons. Otherwise the rat race will continue.

BEN FLOWDEN
Director
The Pedestrians Association
London EC1

Sir: I am 41 and a company director. I drive to work and, in fair weather, cycle. I admit to cycling on pavements at times and I would suggest that the critics of cyclists try using a bicycle for a week to see how they get on ("On your bike: this is war", 1 September). The density of traffic on narrow roads gives a cyclist little choice but to use pavements for safety's sake. Most people drive everywhere these days leaving the pavements deserted.

I do not condone cyclists tearing down pavements recklessly, or failing to give pedestrians right of way. Those I meet when walking myself show polite respect for pedestrians.

It would seem a sensible way forward for councils to try setting aside areas of the pavement for cyclists. They have started to do this here in Brighton, and it makes a tremendous difference.

QUENTIN KING
Brighton, East Sussex

New ways to vote

Sir: Lord Parkinson (Right of Reply, 26 August), and your correspondents (Letters, 1 September), writing on proportional representation, have overlooked that a new voting system must change both the way people vote and the nature of political parties. At the moment some people vote tactically by supporting their second choice party because they believe their first has no chance of winning. These are likely to vote differently under a different system.

A change in voting behaviour must cause the parties to alter their policies and campaigns; and it is the minority of voters who are prepared to change their vote who really influence the party policy.

In addition, a more proportional voting system makes the ability to form coalitions a marketable asset. The parties need to emphasise areas where they can compromise and co-operate, not only those where they stand clearly different from their fellows.

One of the most powerful arguments for PR is that it favours politicians and parties who look for

common ground. Where different parties find agreement it is far more likely that there is an underlying rational truth to support the policy than a mere coincidence of blind prejudice. Thus PR favours the rational and the enduring over the emotional and fickle.

Critics will say that when tough radical policies are really necessary PR will not deliver politicians tough and powerful enough to see them through. This is an illusion created by the present system, which does not enable people who are both tough and rational to rise high in politics. Such people cannot gain sufficient support within one party, because rational people tend to repel some of their more emotional colleagues. And first-past-the-post cuts them off from support from within any other party.

KEN HAGGETT
Sheffield

The Diana myth

Sir: It is amazing that people who did not even know Diana, Princess of Wales, continue to mourn her. It is true that Diana left behind two sons, but people with children die

every day, without ever experiencing a meal at the Ritz in Paris, and their children are left without the benefit of an estate of millions.

She lived the life of a privileged aristocrat, who used charitable activities as a public relations exercise to justify a luxurious lifestyle. The fact that working Britons perceived Diana as having a "common touch" and uncritically supported her endless vacations, extravagant wardrobe and worldwide shopping expeditions, indicates just how successful the public relations exercise was.

FRANCES WIDDOWSON
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

What exams test

Sir: Coursework and exams are unlikely to be able to furnish "genuinely equivalent academic qualifications" (letter, 28 August). Coursework does not give the bright student credit for completing a given assignment to a given standard quickly; and because coursework is usually done on computers, it allows the student who cannot write

grammatically, spell or punctuate to appear just as able as his colleague (and future competitor for jobs) who can write well without recourse to spell-check and grammar-check functions. Thus, if coursework were to replace exams, the comparatively slow and illiterate could appear as well-qualified as the quick, efficient and literate.

For these reasons, conventional exams should be retained. If, as a society, we value literacy, we can thereby ensure that those who have taken the trouble to acquire it are identified by their degree results. This is only fair to them and to their future employers.

TOM SHEPHERD
Brighton, East Sussex

Shellfish abuse

Sir: The Shellfish network was formed four years ago to campaign peacefully against cruelty to these animals ("Think shrimp", Magazine, 29 August). Standard cooking methods are to boil, steam, grill or cut up while they are alive and fully conscious. It is a much-neglected subject compared with other issues of animal abuse. Though relatively "humane" techniques for stunning crabs and lobsters before cooking have been put forward by animal welfare organisations these are not required by law in Britain.

We were active in the protest that made Waitrose and Tesco abandon plans to sell live lobsters. We believe we are the only organisation to give a consistently high profile to the shellfish. But they remain at or near the bottom of the league-table of public sympathy.

We are running a national petition calling on the Government to ban the exploitation of shellfish for human consumption and to press for this at European Community level.

JULIE ROXBURGH
Leatherhead, Surrey

Mall misery

Sir: As an inner-city resident in the UK, currently working in the US, I was most interested in your timely coverage of the issue of out-of-town development ("The mall that ate Manchester", 2 September).

It is hardly surprising that major retailers clamour to move to new out-of-town premises, out of a desire to expand their businesses in a limited market. However, you are right to point out that these developments lead to the devastation of city centres.

A brief acquaintance with some of the cities of North America, where city centres have given way to block after block of bleak dereliction, with attendant poverty and crime, illustrates vividly the potential risks of unrestricted out-of-town investment.

Some may think the UK will be immune to this problem, or consider any such risk a price well worth paying, in order to reap rich commercial rewards, and much more questionably, to increase customer convenience. Others, however, who wish city centres to remain home to vibrant cultural life, may well disagree.

Dr J PINKNEY
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge
Louisiana
USA

A tax on land

Sir: If Lord Plant ("Memo to Mr Blair: we need to talk about raising taxes", 1 September) is attracted to "unevitable" taxes, that is very welcome. Land rental accounts for some 20 per cent of national income, is hardly taxed at all and yet could provide a substantial proportion of public revenue. In several other countries it already does.

Land values arise as a result of the efforts of the community at large, through public and private investment and demand for land and its products. Landowners, as distinct from producers, contribute nothing yet retain the entire surplus of wealth that the rest of us create.

Unlike almost all other taxes, a land tax cannot add to the cost of production. Indeed, provided it is levied irrespective of whether the owner chooses to realise the site's inherent value, it can act as a great stimulant to wealth creation. For a land tax to work, it has to be levied like traditional property rates, as an Owner's Land Charge. It should also be accompanied by reductions in other taxes.

As Jonathan Porritt, former director of Friends of the Earth, recently said: "Any sub-optimal use of land is a breach of the ethical duty we owe to future generations."

TONY VICKERS
Newbury
Berkshire

Books for the boys

Sir: By choosing a list of recommended books which consists entirely of fiction ("What a growing lad needs is a naughty book", says Blair", 31 August), Tony Blair reinforces one of the assumptions that make life more difficult for boys in the education system, the assumption that reading is to be worthwhile, must mean reading traditional fiction.

There is anecdotal and research evidence that many boys prefer reading non-fiction, such as books and magazines relevant to their hobbies and interests. By overlooking or belittling boys' interests, many educationalists and media pundits have contributed to the alienation of boys from books. Perhaps Mr Blair should be encouraged to set an example by giving us a list of those non-fiction titles, on subjects ranging from history and art to music, sport and technology, which he would most like to share with his sons.

Dr GRAHAM GOULD
Department of Theology and
Religious Studies
King's College
London WC2

Why we have no Volkswagen Guide to British Restaurants

I HAVE just been reading a First World War novel by - no, not by Sebastian Faulks or Pat Barker, but by a Frenchman who was actually alive when the Great War happened. I have been reading a little-known novel called *Un Rude Hiver* (A Hard Winter) by Raymond Queneau, which so appealed to me when I first read it that I find myself rereading it once every five years or so.

It's a strange, sad, funny, little story set in Queneau's home town of Le Havre at a time (about 1917) when the Allies and Germans had not yet thought of bombing it into modernity. From Queneau's description Le Havre was still a bourgeois little place with vast docks attached, swarming with Canadian, British, Serbian and other unlikely troops dedicated to getting the

Germans out of France - indeed, the opening scene depicts the parade through the town of a newly arrived Chinese contingent.

Nobody knows what the Chinese are doing in Le Havre or where they came from, but everyone turns out to watch in amazement, and listen to their "King of Siam music". ("So called," adds Queneau, "because when the little King of Siam had come on a visit to France and been taken to a concert, what he liked best had been the bit at the beginning where the violins and other instruments were all tuning up...")

The action, such as it is, involves the hopeless passion of one Bernard Lehoumeau for an English WAC girl in uniform called Helena Woods, but most of the time the characters drift around discussing the war's progress. At one point Lehoumeau

says: "Everyone knows what the different combatants want out of the war. The French just want to reconquer Alsace-Lorraine. The Germans want to conquer the world. Well, you have to admit that the Germans do have a loftier aim..."

This made me smile when I read it, but it also stuck in my mind. Was it true then? Is there a relic of truth in it now? Do nations still dream of conquest? Do the British still dream at night of the pink-blotched atlas?

Having thought about it long and hard, I think I may have stumbled nearer the truth. Every nation still wants to rule the world. It's just that they want to rule it in a different way, in a way which reflects their national character, or at least in a way which gives them a chance of winning.



MILES KINGSTON

Do nations still dream of conquest? Do the British still dream at night of the pink-blotched atlas?

The British long to beat everyone at football. The Japanese want to have a monopoly of the world's

electronic gadgets. The Americans want to be the world's sheriff, the world's good guy. The Swedes long to have the world's lowest suicide rates, or at least the most reliable cars. The Irish want to be the most charming nation in the world. The French...

You may have noticed that all these ambitions are unrealistic, but none more so than that of the French, because their ambition is to be the cultural champions of the world, taking in cooking, cinema, art, wine, style, everything. That is why the French raise such Cain about the contamination of their language, their film industry, their cuisine, and so on.

You don't get the Germans screaming blue murder about the Americanisation of their films, or of their cooking. They don't rate

themselves that highly in those areas to begin with. You don't get German food guides coming over to Britain and handing out rosettes to British restaurants, as Michelin does, with the British press agog at each fresh bit of praise handed out to our cooking...

I may be wrong. There may be German food guides run by German tyre companies, there may be the equivalent of Herr Gault and Herr Millau coming over here and dispensing German laurels to our eating places. What is significant is that if there are, we have not heard of them. We would not give a fig for a German rosette hanging outside an English restaurant (and, to be honest, vice versa). What we prize is the Michelin award and the membership of Les Routiers.

What that means is that we have come to accept the French at their own valuation. We have come to agree that the French really are world arbiters of taste when it comes to cooking, even though you cannot find a discerning British holiday maker who has not recently had an awful meal in a restaurant in France. (I have had two or three in the last month.)

And the reason for this agreement on French superiority may be that the French are world champions at one thing above all else - not cooking or films or wine but publicity and marketing. In other words, at persuading people that they are the bee's knees when in fact they are nothing of the sort.

Tomorrow we ask the question: Are the French the world's best con-artists?

THE INDEPENDENT

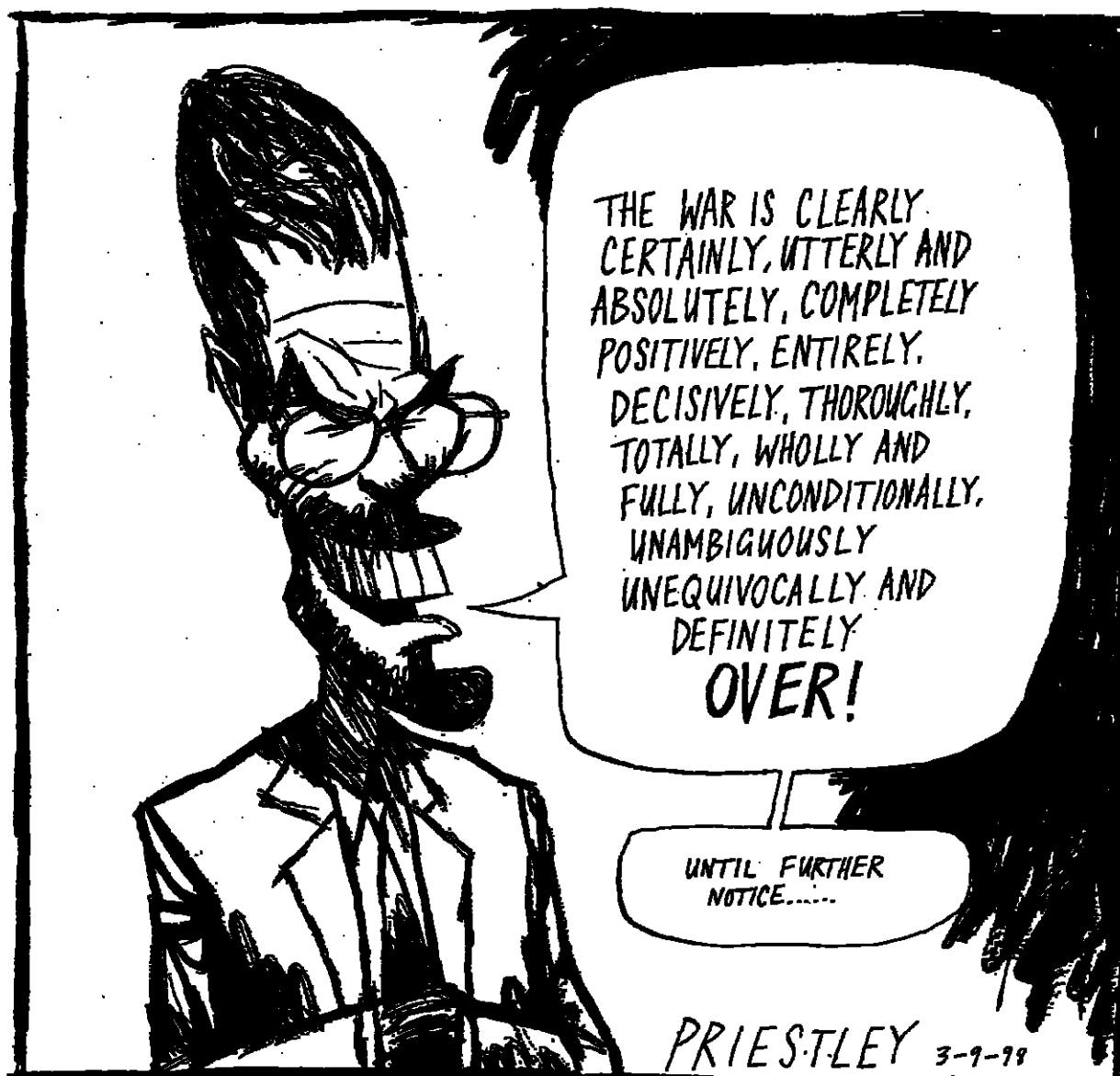
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Let's now start to take the gun out of Irish politics

SO MARTIN McGuinness has been appointed by Sinn Féin to be its representative to deal with the independent international commission on the decommissioning of arms. It is good news, if a little startling for the naive few who believed Sinn Féin's tireless protestations that the IRA was really nothing at all to do with it. The choice of McGuinness is particularly telling, as he has historic and well developed links with the IRA, having been convicted of membership of the organisation in courts in the Republic of Ireland and having been a frequent guest at funerals of IRA men. With his background and seniority in the republican movement, he should prove, at least, a man with whom the leader of the decommissioning body, General de Chastelain, can do business.

The decision to support more actively the decommissioning process comes, of course, shortly after Gerry Adams's declaration that "Sinn Féin believe the violence we have seen must be for all of us now a thing of the past, over, done with and gone". This is the nearest that Sinn Féin's pride may ever get to allowing it to use the phrase "the war is over", as its critics demand. It would, of course, be foolish to do other than welcome these words. But it is also worthwhile exploring the reasons for Sinn Féin's initiatives. Obviously, as with the release of the two Scots Guards, the visit of President Clinton and the parallel emergency sessions of the Irish and British parliaments, there is spin-doctor choreography at work in these coincident events. Clinton, after all, needs to take something of substance back with him to America, and, weakened though he may be by the Lewinsky affair, he is still able to exert influence and pressure on this side of the pond to help him do so.

But, clear as these proximate reasons may be, there are still more fundamental factors at work. Above all, the shock of the murders at Omagh may have influenced Sinn Féin into considering whether it is really part of the peace process to have stashes of guns and explosives sprinkled around the island of Ireland ready for existing and new splinter groups to use (in time, possibly, even against former republican comrades). Sinn Féin will certainly have witnessed another expression of the public mood and decided to position itself to take advantage of that. In the aftermath of Omagh, Sinn Féin will have realised, too, that the unionists - and a much wider range of public opinion than just that represented by David Trimble - could not have tolerated Sinn Féin's



participation in the government of Northern Ireland, notwithstanding their apparently sincere denunciation of the bombers of Omagh.

Now that the IRA is that much closer to giving up its arms, Trimble should take part in all-party talks with Sinn Féin about the running of the assembly. He would be right, though, to refuse the symbolic handshake with Adams until some more concrete progress has been made on decommissioning. It will come.

Even at this short distance, we can now see that the atrocity at Omagh has, as some privately, quietly, allowed themselves to hope, produced some good and actually helped the peace process by alienating still

further the men and the cause of violence - and done so to the extent that even Sinn Féin could not withstand the momentum. We can only continue to hope that the words of Adams and McGuinness actually lead to action and that we move closer to what Adams is fond of calling "taking the gun out of Irish politics". We still have to cope with the possibility that this could be another false dawn: only last week the IRA boldly declared: "There will be no decommissioning." But the momentum still seems to remain with the peace process, and we should be optimistic for the long run. For once, perhaps, the question "what good can come of this?" has, in the case of Omagh, been positively answered.

Make the polluter pay the full price

THE ENVIRONMENT Agency's attempts to bring corporate polluters to book is being undermined by the leniency of the courts towards guilty companies. The average fine is a piffling £2,000 per tonne, although Wessex Water (1997 profits £130 million) discharged 1 million gallons of raw sewage into a Dorset marina on last year's August bank holiday and was fined only £5,000 with £500 costs. One may well ask: 'What's the point?'

The judiciary should realise that for multi-million pound organisations, being taken to court is simply a cost-benefit analysis like anything else. Unless the fine is big enough to threaten the company's profitability and share dividends when the subject pops up at the next board meeting it will quickly be passed over with just a rueful shake of a few greying heads.

The basis on which the fines are worked out needs to be looked at again. Instead of finding a company guilty, adjourning for 20 minutes, then producing a figure which sounds impressive to the local press but is actually plucked from thin air, magistrates should be given new guidelines.

To make the polluters pay properly (and make sure it doesn't happen again) the engineering reason why the incident happened in the first place should be looked at. Even the most trivial of human errors can be guarded against with a sufficient level of investment and, if the humans at that company are in the habit of making errors, perhaps this is the basis on which the fine should be worked out. Thus an overflow of sewage can be guarded against by building a back-up tunnel at a six-figure cost and the result would be a fine that is both punitive and deterrent. The benefit of any doubt should be given to the environment, not to the company in the dock and the legal maxima for pollution fines at magistrates court should be removed.

A princely mistake

SO PRINCE Harry is following his brother to Eton. The most disappointed man in this scenario is Eric Dawson, headmaster of Sir William Romney school in Tetbury, Highgrove's local comprehensive. "In neither case did the family come and look round the school," he tells *The Independent* sadly. "We have a new humanities block, a swimming pool and a sports centre." And worse, the Prince of Wales declined to live out the middle-class fantasy of choosing from 10 family palaces in order to get his sons into his state school of choice. Definitely a missed opportunity to modernise the royal family.

It's time to stand up for the élitist view of television

I ALWAYS say that just 'cos the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Major and Gerald Kaufman agree on something, it doesn't necessarily mean that it ain't so. Our three doubtful heroes all oppose the shunting back in the ITV schedules of the country's most famous news programme, *News At Ten*, because they fear that it is a sign of what the Germans might call *Unterdänkung*. And - despite ITV's protestations to the contrary - the move, which was announced yesterday afternoon, is exactly that. At 11pm, audiences will drop by at least a third, as many citizens retire to bed, exhausted after the Big Movie.

Of course, we've heard a lot this week about how all this is inevitable; we are moving inexorably to the deregulated TV world. Elisabeth Murdoch and successful independent producer Peter Bazalgette have variously used the platform provided for them at Edinburgh's TV festival to argue the case for deregulation. How anachronistic all these three initial bodies - ITC, BBC - look set against the backdrop of the digital future! The words dikes, holes, boys and fingers spring to mind when contemplating the new Age of TV. No, the viewer must be allowed to decide what and how they watch.

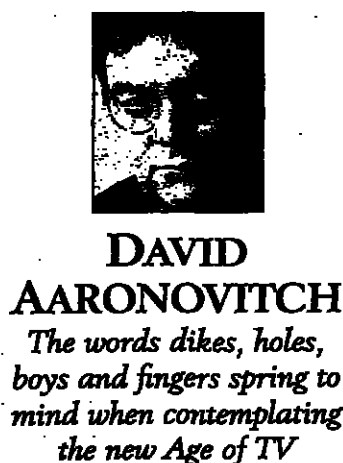
Indeed, a taste of this coming universe of complete viewer choice was available in an ad in this newspaper's Media pages on Tuesday. The Comedy Channel featured a man who declared: "I want to watch *Seinfeld* every night. Not just once a week. Can't wait. Won't wait." In these circumstances how can commercial channels possibly compete if someone keeps trying to tell them what to do?

Anyway, said Baz and Liz, that's what the BBC is for; to do the things that no one else wants or can afford to do. Aunty can flirt with unpopularity because it is funded by the licence fee, and because higher things are expected from it. As long as the Beeb maintains its public service remit, what does it matter what the other channels do?

Oh but it does. The BBC long ago realised that the political basis of the licence fee rests on its all-round popularity as much as upon the singularity of its mission. It certainly will not have enjoyed the Independent Television Commission's research findings, published yesterday, showing that viewers think of the Corporation as "staid, stuffy and establishment... like Queen Victoria or John Major". If ratings drop too far, then even wall-to-wall Colin Firth in wet shirts won't save it in the long run. In the short term this means that if ITV does move *News At Ten* backwards, all kinds of weird things will begin to happen over at Television Centre.

For a start ITV will begin to schedule bookbusters beginning at the 9pm watershed. Programmes like *Panorama* (in which I must declare a familial interest, now going out in the 10pm slot, will find themselves up against the climactic hour of *Lethal Weapon 3* or something. The *Nine O'Clock News* will coincide with the opening, explosive titles. In ratings terms the Beeb could be rubbed out. *Newsnight*, on BBC2 at 10.30pm, could also find itself vulnerable to slippage, especially in 18 months time when Sir John Birt (who fought for its current slot) has gone to serve his country elsewhere.

At which point we could raise our



DAVID AARONOVITCH
The words dikes, holes, boys and fingers spring to mind when contemplating the new Age of TV

hands palm upwards, along with Alfred E. Newman and the current affairs executives from the commercial companies, and ask "What me worry?" Is it not a fact, m'lud, that there is more factual material on telly than ever before? It's just that the old arrogant approach to current affairs ("a thing is important because a producer thinks it important") has been ditched for the new "relevant to people's lives" strand.

This is a classic weasel, used by intelligent executives to justify just how far they have strayed from their own youthful, idealistic enthusiasm for truth and salience. And if you don't believe me take a look at next week's *Radio Times*. We can agree, I think, that we do not live in an era short on big news. At the moment there is the crisis in Russia, the prospect of a global recession, extraordinary developments in Ireland, further evidence of

global warming, an impasse at the heart of the British welfare state, a resurgence of terrorism from the Middle East and the deepening of the problems in the Tiger economies. And how does this reflect itself in non-news factual programmes next week? There is nothing. Nada. Zip.

What Me Worry? ITV can offer us *Estate Agents*, followed by *Office Affairs*, "a series of frank interviews detailing what can happen when people conduct affairs that start in the workplace". Then there's *Fox*, "a six part series examining people's concerns about body fat". On Tuesday in the old current affairs doc slot, we are offered *Chippendale's: A Secret History*. We may thrill to a *First Edition* on headline, and worry about *Crime Fighters*. *Police, Camera, Action* and the new *Motorway Life*, which is essentially *Police, Camera, Action* without the police or the action.

Lest the ITV bods think I'm getting at them we might reflect that on Monday the one prime-time current affairs slot goes to a show featuring "an undercover item on telephone lines offering bogus tarot readings that are deliberately extended to inflate the bill". As opposed, presumably, to those lines that offer accurate tarot readings, done crisply. Then there's *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News* - and that's it.

On the same day you can watch seven hours of talk shows on the five terrestrial channels. Start on BBC1 with *Kiroy* at 9am, followed by *Ser Wars* at 10am. On BBC2 a new series of *Esther* begins, bizarrely, with Carol Vorderman "exploring modern-day father-son relationships". ITV has *Vomessa* at 9.25, *Jerry Springer* at 1.30 (today's as I write is "Your Lover's A

Loser" and features so much bleeped out material it is virtually incomprehensible). Channel 4 offers *Montel Williams* at 5 and *X-Rated Ricki* at 10.55pm ("a father's choice of clothing has attracted the attention of his grandchildren's transvestite nanny"). Channel 5 wins with not one, but two bites of *Oprah* (9.30 and 5.10), sandwiching *Leeza* (11.10).

This, remember is the regulated schedule. Try and guess what the unregulated one would look like. But oh, what an élitist I am! Isn't this talk-show hell what people want? Regulation is a surely a patronising act. Regulators tell people what they ought to want - but actually they don't. They are sophisticated enough, say Liz and Baz, to know what they're interested in.

Ah, but are the broadcasters sophisticated enough to interpret the evidence properly? My position may well be: give people - at least partially - what they ought to want. But what is the alternative? To give people what they say they want? To give people what they think they ought to want? To give people what they think their kids ought to want? Or, as I suspect, to give people more of what they watch most already?

Which, I think, means giving the majority of people nothing that they don't want. Or, to put it another way, it means giving a minority of people almost nothing that they do want. Independent readers are, of course, just such a minority. True, we happen to be a minority that advertisers would give their right arms for. So we must stand up and fight for the telly we want. Write in to ITV. Tell them *ne touchez pas à mon Trevor!* Long live Gerald Kaufman! *What Continues!*

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"They believe their mother would want people now to move on - because she would have known that constant reminders of her death can create nothing but pain to those she left behind."
Sandy Henney,
on behalf of Princes William and Harry

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"There is a goal but no way;
what we call the way is mere wavering."
Franz Kafka,
Czech author

WHEN YOU BREAK DOWN WHO'LL BE THERE TO PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

...THAT'S THE JOB OF THE AA

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If it can be established that Sinn Féin is now working in good faith for peace and progress, that objective, far from being an impossible dream, could become an invigorating reality which would change the political landscape forever and vastly increase the chances of a lasting peace. Unionists must be ready to acknowledge that republicans will be included in a democratic government, provided there is a permanent cessation of violence. That is

now the imperative if things are to move forward.
News Letter, Belfast

IT WAS never likely that Mr Adams would be in a position to announce that "the war is over", but yesterday's declaration amounted to the same thing. Mr Adams has already unequivocally condemned the Omagh massacre and rejected all violence in the most direct terms. It was striking how enthusiastically the statement was welcomed by both London

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
Irish reaction to Gerry Adams's statement renouncing violence



and Dublin. Trimble's response was more restrained, but that was to be expected. When the impact of the statement by Mr Adams is taken into consideration, yesterday can be seen as an excellent day for the entire community.
Irish News, Belfast

WHATEVER THE IRA may say, decommissioning forms part of

the agreement. And it is not a question of what the IRA call "word games". It is a question of Sinn Féin's commitment to using only peaceful and democratic means to advance their aims. It is a question of making it possible for David Trimble to sit with them in a new Northern executive. Yesterday Mr Adams made a major and laudable step in the right direction. We look forward to his next vital steps towards making peace and tolerance a reality.
Irish Independent, Dublin

NOT ALL of Mr Trimble's party will be immediately persuaded of the value of Mr Adams's words. Mr Trimble will not be without internal resistance if he seeks to respond affirmatively. None the less, outside of his party ranks he will be under intense pressure to do so, not least from President Clinton. Mr Adams's statement and Mr McGuinness's participation in the decommissioning body give him at least some of the political space he requires.
Irish Times, Dublin

PANDORA

THE SOON-to-be-published *Dictionary of Liberal Biography* includes the lives of prominent Liberals from John Stuart Mill to Paddy Ashdown – and some interesting omissions. One of the missing is Clement Freud, a Liberal MP from 1973-87. "Most people in the book are dead, because they make the most decent biographies," editor Duncan Brack told Pandora. "When he [Freud] dies, we might even put him in." That might placate Clement a bit – until he opens the book and finds it includes every single current Lib Dem MP and peer. Are they all dead?

RANKS AND insurance companies are very concerned with the current Disability Discrimination Act. It will force them to make "reasonable adjustments" to communicate with disabled people in suitable formats. A campaign on Classic FM gives the number of the DDA Information Line (part of the Central Office of Information) for people who want more information on the Act. Much to his surprise, a recent caller, who works for a charity for the blind, was told that the relevant document was only available as a printed text. No braille, audio cassette or diskette was on offer. Indeed no date has been set for issuing the information in any of these highly suitable formats.

A COLLEAGUE of Pandora was taken back this week as he entered the Cabinet Office. The waiting room was empty of reading matter – not a single British paper – but for copies of the *National Enquirer*, an American tabloid that makes the *Daily Star* read like the *Times Literary Supplement*. A glance at the current *Enquirer* reveals must-read reports such as "New Hollywood Hunk Has Secret Nerd Past" and "Clean Up Mold Before It Ruins Your Health", as well as "How Bill Confessed To Heartbroken Hillary". Is there a message in the Cabinet Office's decision to offer this trip to its official visitors?

THOSE FIRST days back from holiday can be so depressing, but let's spare a special thought for Nancy Reagan. Having just returned home to Bel Air following her carefree *Thelma and Louise*-style road trip with Baroness Thatcher around Martha's Vineyard and the Hamptons, not only did she return to the difficult job of caring for her Alzheimer's-afflicted husband, but she had to put down faithful old Rex, the family dog since White House days. That's according to *Daily Variety*, which reveals in the same article that Nancy's jolly jaunt with Maggie was taken on doctor's orders. Meanwhile, we all know how downhearted Maggie was when she got back to these shores and savaged poor William "Boy Wonder" Hague, crowing that he didn't have a hope of winning the next election. Hopefully, she's going somewhere nice for Christmas.

NEXT WEEK is National Pregnancy Week. Boots the Chemists is joining forces with Tommy's Campaign, the national pregnancy research charity, to launch an Internet site aimed at expectant fathers. Of course every New Dad wants to be in the delivery room these days, but many are consumed with doubts about the looming great event. The web site aims to answer all manner of questions, but Pandora urges caution. Medical research just published by Carnegie Mellon University, in Pittsburgh, concludes that intensive surfing of the Net can induce depression, loneliness and stress. Anxious dads-to-be may be wiser to allay their fears in the traditional manner – with the lads down the pub.

FEMALE TENNIS fans have swooned for years over André Agassi's shaggy belly as revealed by his colourful peek-a-boo shirts. Fans at this year's US Open have noticed that André – never a washboard man – is looking especially full-figured. Now the reason has come out. He won a food bet with New York restaurateur over whether he could defeat an opponent in straight sets. Having done so, according to restaurant owner Nino Selimaj, "Agassi came in with nine friends that night, and they were all ordering the most expensive items. It was all guys... all big eaters." One day, Pandora fears, André just might not make it over that net.

Not wild youth, just sad old Brits



BIDISHA
Britain is still a long way from being in a state where the rest of the world would welcome it

tion every night until dawn, but in truth it's nothing more than a glorified package holiday. They are doing nothing that is not expected of twentysomethings and late teens: a bit of drinking, a bit of dancing, a few drugs. Nothing like, for instance, the mass riots of 1988, or political protests in favour of civil rights or against nuclear experimentation. Young people want an easy life, preferably with their own kind.

Ibiza is a modern day cultural version of Britain's favourite pet, the colony. A fabulous exchange rate, secure surroundings, the "hospitality" of the locals, a chance that the vast majority of people you're going to meet will be English – just like you.

Of course, the club trade could be said to form a large part of Ibiza locals' livelihood, but even without it they would certainly have found other means of employment which didn't create such an economically dependent and culturally demeaning relationship with Britain. Instead, locals spend the summer clubbing season ensuring everything is just dandy for the "hedonists". The Brits, in their turn, just want to have a good time with their mates, return home and tell everyone how they got drunk/laid/cooked up all night long, every night.

Britain is still a long way from being in a state where the rest of the world would welcome its integration into the global scheme of things. Young Brits want holiday destinations where they can be sure of meeting only other Brits. They want to go to a foreign country, take advantage of the strong pound and in-

digenous willingness to please, then simply go home after they've had their fun.

An extension of Ibiza clubbing madness is the common practise of backpacking after school or university. Although there are some people who genuinely learn from the places they are visiting, all too often nothing is given back to those countries themselves. Again, moneyed-up "travelers" take advantage of ridiculous exchange rates to buy trinkets which they then proudly display back home, saying, "It cost me just 50p really, but that's enough to feed an entire family over there."

They simply do not understand (and make no effort to understand) the real workings of societies in other countries, especially the East. Their stories merely corroborate what small-minded Westerners always thought about the East. That, say, Calcutta is the place where amputees beg in the streets and people live in corrugated iron shacks; or that Patpong is the den of bachelors and ladyboys.

Even worse, though, are the woolly liberals who wear their good intentions on their sleeves, mean-

ing to fully explore every avenue of "their" culture, "their" customs and the way "they" communicate with each other "over there". This is even better: a neat way to package and possess an entire country, its social history, its political background and ideological development, and then expound on it like a cultural connoisseur over your Hampstead dining table. "Oh no, you see, in their culture they do it very differently from us... It's all in their past, you know..."

This doesn't bother me so much any more, though, because the world is realising that the English aren't a very likeable set of people, and, more importantly, nowhere near as politically influential as they used to be. Culturally, Cool Britannia may be in full swing, but the old conservatism – regardless of which party is in government – and xenophobia are still charmingly intact. The English can't cause trouble any more – not even in football matches. They will be stopped. Events in Ibiza aren't a terrifying example of British thuggery; they're just a prime example of the recreational habits of a sad people.

Blair is right to join Dublin in an anti-terror crackdown



PETER CUNNINGHAM
Ahern described the legislation as 'draconian', but without it the violence will return

IN THE days after the Omagh bomb, Tony Blair in consultation with the Irish government, decided on today's recall of Parliament in order to push through sweeping anti-terrorist measures. Blair's critics have not been slow off the mark. They accuse him of making a selective attack on terrorism, in this case Irish, and for a misguided abandonment of reliance on existing domestic law, which, they claim, is already adequate. More, Blair is accused of fitting Britain with a noose of emergency powers that will lead in jig time to a choking of civil liberties. But with his eye unwaveringly on the Irish problem as it has been since he came into power, Blair knows that by far the greater risk will be to ignore the rare opportunity which has arisen as a result of the Omagh atrocity.

These are times of rapid change in Ireland. In a political landscape notorious for its dogged lack of change, the speed of the current transformation is awe inspiring. The hope over long years by a committed few, sustained in the face of odds beyond imagination, has finally found fertile opportunity in a confluence of factors: an American President who has been persuaded to make peace in Ireland a priority of his administration, and a British Prime Minister who, uniquely, is both interested in solving the problem in Ireland once and for all, and who has the political means to do so.

Once and for all. Or "over, done with and gone". The words of resolute men and women, they ring with the finality of the utterly determined. Gerry Adams used just this language two days ago in drawing a line under the violence of the past, and whether or not his motivation sprang from expediency dictated by the prospect of his meeting at last with David Trimble, the leader of the

Ulster Unionists and Northern Ireland's first minister, or from a wish to ingratiate himself further with Bill Clinton who comes to Omagh today, or because Sinn Féin thought such a statement might head off Britain's emergency legislation, or for all or none of these reasons – the fact remains that he said it. Add that to Sinn Féin's unique and unequivocal condemnation of Omagh, and the speed of change in current Irish politics becomes apparent.

The problems of Northern Ireland are not solved, of course, but the dreadful events in Omagh on the afternoon of 15 August may just have tipped the scales at a crucial moment. On the following morning, I drove half the length of Ireland, listening on the car radio to seasoned reporters speak in breaking voices of the scenes of desolation all around them. I went that afternoon to Croke Park in Dublin with 50,000 others to watch Waterford play Kilkenny in a hurling match. We stood for a minute's silence before the game. Men and women wept. The silence could have lasted 30 minutes and no

one would have been the first to speak. This was the Irish heartland come to Dublin – and it was shocked and ashamed and heartsick to a man.

But mood is ephemeral. Five years ago, in the wake of the Warrington bomb when, in a British newspaper, I called for Ireland to confront the ghost in its psyche and repeal those articles of its constitution repugnant to Unionists, going on a popular Irish radio programme to defend my case, my voice was in a minority of one. Callers to the programme were overwhelmingly opposed to my suggestion, despite Warrington and the deaths of children. Militant Irish republicanism is deeply entrenched and its followers are never on the back foot for long.

But they are a tiny minority. Moderate republicanism in Ireland is a proud and honourable tradition, but where England is concerned, one which is rooted in mistrust. What has there been in the canon of history between the two countries which might persuade the Irish that England or its justice can be trusted? Not a lot. The cases of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six were spectacular failures in the responsibility which the justice system of one sovereign country is obliged to extend to the citizens of another. Trust is slow to grow in such a hinterland.

Bertie Ahern understands this. A canny political operator, already backed by a massive 94% vote in last May's referendum which at last jettisoned Ireland's constitutional claims over Northern Ireland, Ahern has now seized the new mood of revulsion which has swept Ireland and has moved ruthlessly into territory which before, due to the historical lack of trust, would never have allowed him a safe passage. Ahern was the first to use the term "dra-



Tony Blair meets Bertie Ahern at Ashford Castle, Co Mayo

conian" to describe the new legislation, also being debated in Dublin this week in tandem with that at Westminster. The Irish courts will be girded with new powers. Terrorists from now on can be arrested on the word of a police officer, or above, the rank of superintendent and brought to trial on such a basis. The courts may order the seizure of the assets of those so convicted, similar measures to those already successfully introduced in Ireland to curtail drug smuggling. Omagh, designed by the executioners of 28 people to destroy the Good Friday Agreement, has been a tactical disaster for the terrorists. Far from shaking Ahern, the taoiseach's hand has been strengthened even more.

But for Ahern to have attempted such legislation alone would have been a nonsense. If terrorists could skip across the border to a safe haven in Northern Ireland or in England, finding a sanctuary within the very body politic they are sworn to destroy, then Ahern's new legislation would have been toothless. And without Ahern's measures, when the

mood of Omagh eventually ebbed, the men and women, for whom no greater ideal exists than the blood sacrifice of 1916, would rise up, or crawl out, again, and the cycle of violence would be resumed.

Like Blair, Ahern is a man for his time. The time is now and it is for a final end to the misery. Over, done with and gone. The people of Ireland have spoken and although only some of them are his people, Blair believes in the integrity of the argument and is prepared to take risks for what he believes in. Recalling parliaments and giving laws both sides of the border a sound footing is another step in the new era of trust between the countries. Anything less from Britain at this moment, and Ireland, a young country with a long memory, will never reach the promised land that the overwhelming majority of her people north and south wish for.

Peter Cunningham's new novel, *'Consequences of the Heart'*, will be published at the end of this month by Harvill

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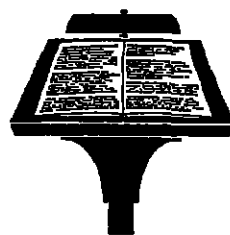
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Vive the United Europe of States



PODIUM
JACQUES CHIRAC
From the French President's address at the fourth annual Conference des Ambassadeurs

SOME PEOPLE think that France has lost some room for manoeuvre with the ending of the bipolar order. That's wrong. Firstly, because the disappearance of dictatorships is always good news. But above all because, precisely as a result of the ending of the Cold War, France has regained a great freedom of initiative and action. Since the start of this decade, and for the first time for centuries, France has no enemies. The new, often diffuse threats with which it is confronted are the same as those hanging over our main partners. Having drawn a line under territorial and colonial ambitions, while seeking to strengthen the bonds forged by history, France has managed to adapt to a world where the risks, like the components of power, are changing fast and profoundly. In order to promote its interests, France must be able to build up around it different units, varying with the issues involved. In this new set of alliances based on different areas of mutual interest and differing in nature and the intensity of the activities carried out within them, the most important cir-

cle is, of course, the European Union. The French, even though they are, justifiably, irritated by certain bureaucratic excesses, grasp the full significance of the adventure on which our continent has embarked thanks to the genius of a few visionaries.

For the first time in history, a power is being borne not by force of arms, but through the freely expressed will of its constituent peoples. For the first time, the purpose of this empire forged for intellectual reasons isn't to ensure the domination of one people over its neighbours, but to assert their union on a basis of respect for each country's identity and the collective promotion of shared values. This is what gives the institution we have built its unique character. The EU doesn't want to be the United States of Europe, but the United States of Europe, and, for the first time since the Roman Empire, Europe will, on 1 January next year, have a single currency.

Like all my predecessors, and with Helmut Kohl, I want to make a success of the most ambitious European venture to date. Because it's the

necessary complement to the single market. Because it gives France back a monetary sovereignty – shared, admittedly – but which it had in reality progressively lost. Because it protects our peoples from monetary crises and fluctuations. Because it establishes for us collective economic disciplines which are the best guarantee of sustained, healthy growth and thus of jobs in all our countries. Because, at last, it will enable Europe to be

America's equal in the decisive monetary sphere.

Similarly, we shall soon have to find appropriate solutions in an essential area: the euro's external representation. This accelerated economic integration must be supplemented by further progress in the People's Europe, especially in the sphere of employment and the European social model. This is our way of counteracting some perverse effects of globalisation and it's crucial if we are to ensure our people's lasting support for the European enterprise.

The Agenda 2000 negotiations and reform of the institutions will be difficult. Their successful completion is the inescapable pre-requisite for the forthcoming enlargement. But they must in no way serve as a pretext for postponing it. Let me forcefully reiterate: France would like to see the earliest possible accession of all the applicant States satisfying the conditions laid down in the treaties. Enlargement is both a moral duty and an opportunity for Europe.

The real difficulties which will have to be overcome must not make us lose sight of the EU's long-term goal: to form a

democratic, peace-loving, powerful and prosperous entity of 500 million men and women, which will be the first in the world. The time has also come to supplement this ambitious programme in two spheres.

Firstly, culture. We must speed up the harmonisation, which has begun too slowly, of diplomas awarded by the major European universities. The other sphere is that of foreign policy and security. With the euro, Europe has proved that when it wants to do something, it can. Let's have the will to do things for ourselves on the international stage! It will take time, I know. But progress has to be made.

To carry its partners with it, France must, even more than in the past, develop close and trusting relations with each of the other EU member countries. Also, and above all, it must propose to Germany new and even more ambitious ways of affirming our friendship and co-operation. At the heart of the European enterprise, the relationship between Paris and Bonn and tomorrow between Paris and Berlin is more than ever before, fundamental.

The market's not finished yet

IT HAD to come. For the last 15 years, the rolling revolution of market capitalism has swept across the globe. Now - quite suddenly - we are seeing the reaction. Instead of every bit of news supporting further advances of the market - a privatisation here, a Marxist government being overthrown there - the news is of push-back. Governments are saying: "No, we don't like the costs the market system imposes. Let's try to block it."

The mayhem in Russia was always bound to create concern that the country had made a terrible mistake in giving a bear hug to capitalism. But Russia effectively defaulting on part of its debt does not necessarily signify a rejection of the market: it merely means it can't pay its debts. More significant are the examples of push-back in East Asia, in Malaysia and in China itself.

Malaysia was one of the stunning examples of the advance of the market, but has been caught up in the region's recession, just like everywhere else. Its Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, has played a weak hand badly by alternatively fulminating against sabotage by foreigners and seeking to meet the financial markets' policy suggestions. But this week he has stepped up his attempt to buck the markets by effectively imposing exchange controls and by a ban on share sales for 12 months. Overseas trading of Malaysia securities has also been stopped. And yesterday Dr Mahathir rubbed home his anti-market drive. The pro-market Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, was sacked.

This attempt to challenge the rules of the market contrasts with China's attempt to play within the rules, but use the state's resources to bump the market in the direction the government wants. China has been trying for two weeks to support the Hong Kong stock market, spending \$12.5bn (£7.5bn) in the process. This week it has switched to supporting the Hong Kong dollar. It remains to be seen whether the effort is successful in the long term, but it has had the incidental effect of making China the largest shareholder in Hong Kong securities, including the shares of Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. If you happen to have a bank account at Midland or with First Direct (both owned by HSBC) you may like to know that Red China owns 8.91 per cent of the stock of your bank.

So, in their different ways, two east Asian countries are trying to buck the markets: one by bullying, the other by buying. When the market is running in your favour, capitalism is praised; when it runs against you, you try to fight back.

But what does all this mean for the market revolution? Has it run its course? Are we going to see a serious attempt to roll back the tide, a hunt for a "third way", not just here in Britain but throughout the world? Or is this merely a pause in its advance, an attempt by a few misguided (and probably frightened) politicians to check something they don't understand?

I think it is just a pause, a natural and inevitable pause, in the advance of the market and that in fact we are still in the very early stages of that advance.

The first thing to be clear about is that markets have never been allowed to live unchallenged. What China has been doing on the Hong Kong market is exactly what Japan tried to do: manage share prices. It is not a policy that is very wise, or one which is likely to be successful, but if governments want to risk taxpayers' money in that way, they are free to do so. As for supporting the



HAMISH MCRAE

Has the market revolution run its course, and will we see a serious attempt to roll back the tide throughout the world?

Hong Kong dollar, all governments intervene on the exchanges from time to time.

In the case of Malaysia, it is breaking the rules of the market as they currently prevail, but that was the sort of thing that this country did a generation ago and no one suggested that we had rejected the market economy. We had exchange controls right up to 1979, and wage controls a couple of years before that. Besides, it is harsh to say it, but what a little country like Malaysia does is not going to swing the way the world economy works.

As for Russia, well, plenty of countries default on their debts from time to time. Usually they wrap things up, pretending that they are not defaulting when in fact they are; that is what happened in Latin America in the Eighties. But the end result - banks that have lent to them lose money - is the same. Russia will probably introduce more economic controls over the coming months but that does not necessarily signify a rejection of the market system; merely an attempt to buffer its more disagreeable effects. Maybe the Russians will try to move some way back to a command economy over the next few years, but I find it hard to see that affecting the rest of the world. Russia is not admired for the quality of its economic management. I can't see other countries trying to imitate it.

The second thing to be clear about is that there are lots of different versions of market capitalism, and the next generation will see a tussle between them. To pretend that there is a single model for a market economy is nuts. Take Sweden at one extreme. There the government takes and spends more than 60 per cent of GDP; in the US, by contrast, the Government accounts for less than 35 per cent of the economy. But both are recognisably market economies. The Netherlands has more than 50 per cent of GDP going through the state, but has a privatised post office. We have 40 per cent of GDP going through the state but don't yet feel politically able to take that step.

Not only are there lots of different ways of running a market economy, there ought to be lots of different ways of doing so. That is how we improve the performance of our economies; by allowing the different versions of market capitalism to compete against each other. But do not expect any one model to come out on top. Just as there are different ways of running companies, so there are different ways of running the market system. Finding out what works is a slow, painful and endless process.

It is much easier to be clear about what does not work: we really know with great confidence that the Communist command economy does not work. Only North Korea and Cuba have yet to figure that one out.



The Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur symbolise the boom of Malaysian capitalism

Martin Sykes

Nothing is for ever. Eventually, in some distant day, the run of market capitalism will come to an end. That could be one generation away; more likely, if you look at what happened in the 19th century, it could be three or four generations off.

But, for the foreseeable future, expect an onward march - but an onward march that is characterised by lots of experimentation, lots of shocks, lots of

resistance, and, inevitably, some reverses.

We are working with a "least bad" system, not an optimal one. It takes a certain maturity, a certain common sense, to accept imperfection: not to call for governments to "do something" when things go wrong. Only 25 or so years later, when you look at the effects of government intervention, do you realise how often the intervention makes the problem worse, not

better - usually because the politicians treat the symptoms rather than the illness. We can see that now, looking at a lot of the British government policies of the Sixties and Seventies: pay policies, support of an unrealistic exchange rate, nationalisation of lame duck industries.

That is a lesson I fear that the poor Malaysians are going to have to learn the hard way. As we did.

RIGHT OF REPLY

JENNY BACON



The Director-General of the Health and Safety Executive responds to our coverage of work-related stress

AS YOUR leader ("Legislation is no way to tackle stress", Monday 31 August) implied, employer attitudes, poor organisation and working methods do make employees physically ill. The problem is certainly a large one. Rightly it is no longer fashionable to dismiss stress as a whim's cop-out. A stressed worker is less productive and potentially dangerous - quite apart from the impact on the individual.

Under existing law, employers have a clear duty to ensure their employees' health. That is a preventative duty. The challenge is how to interpret that duty in dealing with work-related stress.

Many employers want guidance and advice. So do our inspectors. Simply leaving it to individual employees to sue their employers after they have been made ill at work is no more appropriate in dealing with stress than with any other form of occupational health. Prevention is better than retribution or compensation. We do need to address factors that are clearly under employers' control. We must avoid confusing the pressures that help people perform well with the unacceptable and avoidable pressures that can damage health.

Your front page story, "Companies to face fines for work-place stress" (Monday 31 August), confuses the straightforward guidance for small firms which we will issue shortly, and a possible Approved Code of Practice to complement existing legal duties. We're examining the feasibility of an Approved Code on work-related stress. If the HSE does decide that a Code would help to clarify what employers need to do to meet their obligations and keep their employees "healthy, happy and here", its proposals would be subject to wide consultation. Let's not close down the debate without solving the problem.

Snowblind and lonely in El Paso

LONELINESS PERVADES this book, seeping from its pages like mist. There is the loneliness of the author, a doctor whose marriage is collapsing, arriving to take up a senior hospital post in a new town. There is the loneliness of the student who becomes his tennis partner and who, it turns out, nurses a nasty cocaine habit. And there is the loneliness of medicine, a profession that makes huge demands of its practitioners' reserves of empathy and compassion but does not reciprocate when they are themselves in need - creating the paradox of "the humane physician who shows little humanity to himself".

Abraham Verghese is an accomplished writer whose own vulnerability gives this book a controlled emotional power. He has arrived in the



THURSDAY BOOK

THE TENNIS PARTNER: THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP

BY ABRAHAM VERGHESE. CHATTO & WINDUS, £16.99

Texas border town of El Paso with his wife and two young children but finds himself as needy as the intern, David Smith, whom he befriends. A passion for tennis is what they share and their twice weekly games soon become an anchor for both their fractured lives.

Smith is an injecting cocaine addict, the most serious kind, who has already been through rehab and is attempting to complete his medical degree for the second time. He is mercurial, moody,

manipulative but also childlike with a neediness that demands protection. Verghese acts as his mentor off court while Smith, an ex-tennis pro, serves as Verghese's coach on court.

The relationship becomes increasingly important to both of them. Neither has other friends in the town and when Smith moves in with his girlfriend, Verghese acknowledges his jealousy. When Smith breaks up with his girlfriend and feels his world crumbling, it is to Verghese that he turns for help. But he is already beyond help and the drugs that have haunted him throughout the book exact their deadly toll.

Although this is ostensibly the story of Smith, a man whose addiction finally destroyed him, Verghese's own story is engrossing. *His Friendship*, though intense, was also oddly superficial. Verghese knows nothing of Smith's drug history until Smith confesses one night. He fails to pick up the signs of his deteriorating mental state that presage his return to "using", although to his girlfriend they were obvious. Like many, especially male, relationships this one worked precisely because it skirted round issues that both partners recognised were too painful to confront.

Verghese, the author of *My Own Country*, the widely praised account of his experience dealing with AIDS sufferers, is at his best when writing about himself. By agreement with his estranged wife, he moves out of the family home and finds an apartment nearby, so he can still see his sons regularly. But he does not furnish the new



Texas provides the setting for a study of isolation

Ian Robinson

apartment. There are no chairs, no table and no bed. He chooses to sleep on the floor and, when his boys visit, they eat pizza off a cardboard box which he reinforces with tape. His minimalist existence accentuates his position as the outcast, the condition he shares with his psychically-matched tennis partner.

As an Indian born in Ethiopia, whose chief memory of childhood was the hostile silences between his mother and father, Verghese was the lonely, inward-looking child who became the sensitive and vulnerable adult. Tennis was what kept him sane, battling a ball against the side of a shed, soothed by the mesmerising thump-thup. His parents may have wondered if he was autistic, he says.

Loneliness, understood as a state of mind rather than a social situation, is at the heart of addiction and obsession. In tennis, Verghese says, he found a way of imposing order on a world that seemed fickle and capricious, and he believed Smith had, too. "People we knew and saw in the hos-

pital led lives that to us seemed complex, unnecessarily encumbered, frivolous even: family reunions, office parties, the ski vacation... We led our solitary but parallel lives on the border, looking in, waiting for the event that would transform us completely." The transforming event for Verghese is Smith's relapse. When he is shipped off, still wearing his operating theatre gown, to rehab for the second time, it is the cue for Verghese to forsake his ascetic existence, move into a new apartment, and shop for wind chimes and the other accoutrements of modern suburban life.

It was as if, he says, a curtain had been drawn back. This book is an elegiac tribute to a friendship whose horrific end may in some way have allowed the recovery of its survivor. Although it is not mentioned in the narrative, we see from the acknowledgments that Verghese has since met and married his second wife and had a third son. For him, rehabilitation is complete.

JEREMY LAURANCE

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THURSDAY POEM

RETURNED SOLDIER
BY JAMES K BAXTER

The boy who volunteered at seventeen
At twenty-three is heavy on the booze.
Strafed in the desert and bombed out in Crete -
With sore dark eyes and hardened by the heat
Entitled now to call himself a man
And in the doll's-house walk with death-at-ease;
The Cairo women, cobbles under sand
A death too great for dolls to understand.

Back to a city bed or station but
At maelstrom centre falling through the night
To dreams where deeper than El Alamein
A buried childhood stirs with leaves and flowers
Remembered girls, the blurred and bitter waters
Wakes to the midnight rafters and the rain.

Our poems this week come from 'Poetry of the Second World War: an international anthology', edited by Desmond Graham (Pimlico, £10)

Viscount Rothermere

VERE HARMSWORTH, the third Viscount Rothermere, was an exception to any number of rules, most notably that newspaper dynasties seldom survive the second generation. Associated Newspapers, and its flagship the *Daily Mail*, were founded a century ago by his great-uncle, Lord Northcliffe, and still remain in the family. Under Rothermere, the *Mail* and its Sunday sister have come to dominate the lucrative middle segment of the newspaper market.

An unashamed patrician, with unorthodox private life, Rothermere succeeded because of his instinctive, perhaps inherited grasp of what was right for the market, and by placing unqualified trust in others' professionalism. While he never underestimated his debt to Sir David English, the long-time editor of the *Mail* who died earlier this summer, nor did English fail to recognise how much he owed his proprietor.

Born in 1925, Vere Harmsworth had an unstable though pampered childhood. His mother, the former Peggy Redhead, split with his promiscuous father Esmond not long after Vere's birth, but both parents lived the life of privileged aristocrats, surrounded by servants in comfortable London and country houses.

Harmsworth's relationship with his father, the second Viscount Rothermere, was never warm, and perhaps for this reason the tall, gangly boy grew up shy and withdrawn. While at school at Eton he would go for long, lonely rides on horseback in Windsor Great Park. At the beginning of the Second World War he was evacuated to the United States but returned to join the Army, serving in north Africa but never gaining commissioned rank.

As the second Viscount's eldest son, there was never any doubt that he would take over the Associated empire. Leaving the army, he began a series of stunts in some of its many outposts, beginning at a paper mill in Quebec. Back in London, he joined the advertising department, then became a circulation representative in Devon before returning to headquarters to climb the executive ladder.

Outside the office he was living the life of a man-about-town. He was a member of the Beefsteak Club and the squire of pretty young actresses. In 1957 he married one of them - the divorcée Patricia Brooks, stage name Beverley, but better known as "Bubbles". They set up homes in London and later in Paris, where he lived for part of the year not only to reduce his British tax liability, but also because he still held the Englishman's traditional romantic view of the French capital. For years he had his office there, in the shabby former headquarters of the *Continental Daily Mail* - founded, as he would proudly tell visitors, by the great Northcliffe.

He passed an important professional landmark in 1963 when he was made a vice-chairman of Associated. The appointment was celebrated in a curious paragraph in the London *Evening Standard*, which ended: "Mr Harmsworth, 38, is an attractive and able man. He will make a great success in his new position."

Connoisseurs of 20th-century journalism will not need to be told who wrote those confident words. They were barked down the telephone in the rasping mid-Atlantic tones of Lord Beaverbrook, then proprietor of the *Standard* and the *Daily Express*, the *Mail*'s arch-rival.

They were Beaverbrook's way of welcoming Harmsworth to the big league of press tycoons. The Canadian baron was to die a year later - too early to see his prediction about Harmsworth proved correct at the expense of his own heirs, eventually so destroyed by the *Mail* that they lost control of the *Express* group.

The qualities that Beaverbrook saw in the young man were not immediately apparent to others. Private Eye dubbed him "mere Vere" because he appeared to play only a minor role in running the newspapers. The reason was that his father was still controlling the company and



did not brook interference from anyone, let alone his son.

The second Viscount very nearly managed to do more substantial damage to his son's dynastic plans. In 1967, at the age of 69, Esmond Rothermere produced a son, also named Esmond, by his third wife, Vere and Bubbles, with two daughters, had not planned any more children - but if they had no son the business would now be inherited by Esmond Jr after Vere's death. Swift remedial action led to the birth at the end of that year of their only son

Rothermere succeeded because of his instinctive, perhaps inherited, grasp of what was right for the market

Jonathan, now the heir apparent.

The Sidies saw a decline in the fortunes of Associated's main titles - the *Mail*, the *Daily Sketch* and the London *Evening News*. Editors came and went at the *Mail* and by the end of the decade its circulation was down to well below two million, little more than half that of the rival broadsheet the *Express*. The tabloid *Sketch* was at 750,000, only a sixth of the figure attained by the all-powerful *Daily Mirror*.

There was nothing Vere Harmsworth could do about any of

this until 1970 when his father, then 71, at last stood down from the chairmanship. At 46 Harmsworth was, for the first time in his life, faced with the necessity of having to take drastic action. Nothing in his career to date suggested that he had the capacity for it.

If anything was to be salvaged from the mess he inherited, it was clear that the *Sketch* would have to close. Harmsworth decided, though, that his talented and ambitious young editor David English should stay and edit the *Daily Mail*, which would be converted into a tabloid.

The mid-market tabloid was an entirely new concept in British journalism. Until then only mass-market papers had adopted the pinstriped format. English and his proprietor believed that by thus radically altering the *Mail*'s appearance they could direct its appeal at young suburbanites, especially women.

The initial results were unpromising and it took nerve to stick with the change. By the end of the year circulation was down to less than one and a half million. English admitted to me a few years later that his own confidence was beginning to crack. He suggested to Harmsworth that the answer might be to go downmarket to compete directly with the *Mirror* and Rupert Murdoch's emerging *Sun*.

"I went to Vere," English recalled, "and he said no. He said we've got to keep the same course. He said the old *Daily Mail* never kept its nerve and that was the trouble. It kept changing tack. It would do something and then if that didn't work it would do the opposite and that didn't work either. He insisted that we should stick to the plan."

It was the middle of 1972 before the wisdom of that decision started

to become apparent. Circulation began to climb and soon the *Express* was forced to follow the *Mail* down the tabloid route, but never with the same success. Today the *Mail*'s circulation is over 2,300,000, just double that of the *Express*.

Harmsworth was exceptionally proud of the relaunch of the *Mail*, listing it as one of his achievements in *Who's Who*. Later in the Seventies, partly motivated by a desire to emulate Rupert Murdoch, he tried, with less success, to expand the Associated empire in the United States.

In 1976 he was defeated by Murdoch in a struggle for *New York* magazine and *Village Voice*. He acquired an interest in *Esquire* magazine and the *Soho Weekly News*, a New York listings and entertainment journal, but failed in a bid to buy *The Trib*, a short-lived mid-market New York daily that he was planning to ask David English to edit for a few months.

Then he journeyed to Wilmington, Delaware, to try to buy a chain of papers there. He made a huge impression on the natives, arriving at his midtown hotel trailed by a heavy wooden cabin trunk containing a supply of the Vichy water to which he was addicted - but he failed to clinch that deal, too.

He succeeded as third Viscount Rothermere in 1978, and back in Britain soon began to enjoy further triumphs. In 1980, after several abortive attempts, he negotiated an end to London's costly evening newspaper war by agreeing to merge his *Evening News* with the *Express* group's *Evening Standard*. Although the *News* ceased publication, the terms of the deal meant that Associated assumed full ownership of the *Standard* when the *Express* group changed hands

in 1985.

In 1982, having failed to buy the *Sunday Times* when the Thomson group sold it to Rupert Murdoch, he launched the *Mail on Sunday*. Again his strong nerve was called for. The first few issues were disastrous, so he fired the editor and gave David English the task of putting the paper on a proper course. Today it sells 2,200,000 a week, again double the circulation of the rival *Express*.

Another triumph that he admitted "gave me enormous pleasure" came in 1987 when he scuppered Robert Maxwell's bid to enter the London evening paper market. To coincide with the launch of the London *Daily News*, Rothermere resuscitated the old *Evening News* and cut its price to 10 pence. This was an attempt to confuse potential buyers and to force Maxwell to cut his price. The play worked so successfully that Maxwell closed his new paper after five months.

In 1992 Bubbles died. For some 15 years their marriage had been an open one, with Vere conducting an unacknowledged affair with Malik Lee, a Korean woman he met in a Parisian night-club. They married in 1993.

As he grew older, Rothermere became still less predictable. Last year he decided to sit on the Labour benches in the House of Lords. This surprised those who assumed that his politics were the same as those of his arch-conservative newspapers, but this had never been so. In interviews - most recently last month in the *Daily Telegraph* - he frequently quarrelled with the policies of his editors.

Living partly in France, he was never as much of a Eurosceptic as Paul Dacre, editor of the *Daily Mail*. He also had doubts about Dacre's editorial strategy, which he thought had taken the paper down-

market.

"There's too much tabloidy reporting," he said. "That kind of thing leads in due course to slovenliness and sensationalism, something reporters use to cover up the fact that they've done no work. I want it to stop." But he added: "Paul is entirely free to do anything except lose readers."

He disapproved of the *Mail*'s gossip column, because he often received complaints from friends who were mentioned in it and also because his own life was far from

'That Vere's turned out to be a remarkably interesting human being after all that training is quite remarkable'

blameworthy. But he could see that it was an important part of the paper's appeal.

He was uneasy about the hereditary principal and in 1978, not long before his father died, he told me he was considering giving up the title when he inherited it. "You could call it vanity, I suppose," he said. "But it means changing my name to somebody else's, and I think I've made a name for myself." In the event he reconciled himself to the sacrifice. But people who met him for the first time - especially Americans - always

remarked on how surprisingly informal he was.

"That Vere's turned out to be a remarkably interesting human being after all that training and all those schools is quite remarkable," said a New Yorker who came into contact with him during the Seventies. "He's charming, he's funny and he's unpretentious. He's old enough to be stuffy but he isn't."

You never knew what to expect with Rothermere, and that could have been the reason for his indisputable success. The fourth Viscount has a lot to live up to.

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

Regarded unfairly as something of a playboy while his father found him a succession of menial tasks at Associated Newspapers, Vere Harmsworth quickly showed his mettle when he was given total control of the *Mail* empire, writes Louis Kirby.

The decisiveness - and ruthlessness - with which he was secretly closing down the ailing *Daily Sketch* in 1971 was a forerunner of the dominant Fleet Street baron he was to become.

Twenty-seven years ago, with Sir David English selecting the best of Associated's columnists, features and sports writers, lay-out men and sub-editors, Rothermere was a brilliant partner. It was total involvement. He could be seen on many a night, reading copy on the back-bench, watching a developing Page One story and comparing the first editions with those of the *Daily Express*.

He always said he would have loved being a sub-editor; his affection for journalists was obvious to us all, but he could be extremely tough. Vere knew exactly what he wanted from his editorial team - and, not least, from his creative advertising team.

During those early days, we gathered in a Hove seafront hotel with a high-powered agency which bristled with state-of-the-art projections. After some editorial speeches, the agency took over and explained that we were making a disastrous mistake. We were, they said, appealing to too many women - and our only salvation was to increase the male readership.

Vere was by now muttering "absolute rubbish" as yet another image maker droned on. "Hear him out, Vere," insisted the agency chief.

"I'm not listening to another word," said a furious Harmsworth. "For heaven's sake, we want to increase our women readership, not decrease it." Thrown out of the meeting, the agency team sped back to London. And within 24 hours a top American writer came up with the memorable slogan: "Every man knows why every woman needs her *Daily Mail*."

Above all, he was a man of great intelligence, of kindness, of crudity and sagacity. When I was editor of the *Evening News*, I agreed to pay the *Daily Mail* £1,000 for its exclusive picture of the first test-tube baby, Louise Brown. But the *Mail* withdrew its offer and I went ahead and published.

Top executives of the *Daily Mail* offered to resign in protest unless I was sacked, and Lord Rothermere summoned me to his house at Cap d'Ail. He reserved the Somerset Maugham suite at the Hotel du Cap, gave me dinner and the following day, at the hotel's swimming pool, he said: "We can't have fellow editors falling out. So I have to slap your wrist and fine you £1,000, which of course will come out of *Evening News* accounts."

Vere Harold Esmond Harmsworth, newspaper proprietor, born London 27 August 1925; chairman, Associated Newspapers Holdings Ltd 1970-88; chairman, *Daily Mail* and General Trust plc 1978-98; succeeded 1978 as third Viscount Rothermere; married 1957 Beverley Brooks (nee Patricia Matthews, died 1992; one son, two daughters, and one stepdaughter); 1993 Malik Lee; died London 1 September 1998.

Peggy Phango

PEGGY PHANGO was the talented South African who created the role of Rose, the buxom, good-natured tap dancing student in Richard Harris's popular play *Stepping Out*.

She first appeared on the London stage as the female lead in the musical *King Kong* at the Prince's Theatre (now the Shaftesbury) in 1961. Based on the true story of a boxing champion who became a folk hero to the shanty townships of South Africa, *King Kong* brought something new to the West End, its surging jazz-influenced rhythms, African harmonies and shanty-town settings, plus the raw energy of its dancing, making it a considerable hit.

When it closed, many of its cast decided to remain in Britain. Though Phango was strongly committed to the cause of anti-apartheid,

she realised that her chances of continued show business success would be far greater if she too remained in this country, though she continued to be outspoken and appeared in two notable television productions about conditions in her native country, *Victims of Apartheid* and *Death is Part of the Process*.

Born in Orlando, Transvaal, in 1928, she became a nurse on leaving school, but started singing in the local jazz clubs. She was spotted by the promoter Albert Herbert, who gave her a role in a touring revue, *African Jazz and Variety*.

In 1959 she was given her major break when the folk singer Miriam Makeba, who had starred in the original African production of *King Kong*, went to America to pursue her career and Phango replaced her in

a touring version as Joyce, the glamorous "shebeen queen", the same part she played when the company came to London.

When plans to take the show to Broadway after the London run failed to materialise, Phango and three other members of the cast formed a vocal quartet, the Velvets. It had considerable success, but while they were appearing with Alexis Korner and his band Blues Incorporated, Phango and Korner's pianist fell in love and the couple decided that Phango should devote a solo act, with which she toured the Northern club circuit, her material including songs from *King Kong* plus traditional Xhosa songs.

Phango was also pursuing a stage career, and made her straight acting debut in England in a Cheltenham pro-

duction of Kaufman and Hart's *You Can't Take It With You*. She followed this with roles in Peter Hall's controversial Covent Garden production of *Moses and Aaron*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* in Birmingham, a German touring production of *Porgy and Bess*, the London revival of *Show Boat*, which featured Cleo Laine as Julie, William Douglas Home's play about Napoleon, *Beitz*, and the revival of Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes*, starring Elizabeth Taylor.

She played Gora in the Traverse production of *Medea* in Edinburgh and at the Riverside, then in 1984 had her finest West End role since *King Kong* when she was cast as Rose in *Stepping Out*. After the London run, she toured the Far East and the Gulf in Derek Nimmo's production of the same show.

Between shows and television appearances, Phango continued her singing career, touring with the South African Dodu Pukwana and the band Zila and occasionally with Miriam Makeba. In the 1988 London revival of *South Pacific*, Phango took the small part of Bloody Mary's assistant because she was offered the chance to understudy Beatrice Reading as Bloody Mary, and eventually she took over the role.

Her television work included such popular series as *EastEnders*, *The Bill* and *Brookside*, but she was particularly proud of two shows which contributed towards public understanding of conditions in South Africa. *Victims of Apartheid* and *Death is a Part of the Process*. The latter, a fine 1983 adaptation by Alan Plater of Hilda Bernstein's power-

ful and moving novel based on the activities of the sabotage group of the early sixties, *Unkhonto We Sizwe* (*Spear of the Nation*), has sadly never been repeated by the BBC.

One of Phango's more recent television appearances, in *Lynda La Plante's Trial and Retribution*, as the meals-on-wheels lady who delivers to an estate where a child is kidnapped, was repeated a few weeks ago, and she recently completed an episode of the series *A Force* that has yet to be seen.

TOM VALLANCE

Peggy Phango, actress; born Orlando, South Africa 28 December 1928; married 1965 Johnny Parker (two daughters, one stepson, one stepdaughter); died London 7 August 1998.



Sir Gordon Newton

GORDON NEWTON was among the most successful and perhaps the most idiosyncratic of British newspaper editors since the Second World War, and arguably of the century.

He was unique among them, as far as I know, in having a dinner society founded in his honour (in 1976, three years after his retirement) whose subsequent annual meetings, initially in the Garrick Club and latterly in the Financial Times headquarters south of the Thames, he himself regularly attended. The first of these garrulous events arranged by alumni of the FT included Patrick Hutter, William Rees-Mogg, Shirley Williams, Christopher Tugendhat, Nigel Lawson, William Davis, John Higgins, Ronald Butt and others whose backgrounds and fascinated interest in Newton, then and later, provided the clues to the secret of his editorship.

There were three main elements in Newton's most capable and individualistic editorship of the FT for 22 years from 1950. To its old offices in Coleman Street in the City - later to the grandiose Bracken House - he recruited graduates, chiefly from Oxford and Cambridge, for brief training and swift appointment to key positions on the paper (which was also braced by already well experienced professional journalists). Some of them I mention above, and there were scores of others, who after their stints on the paper moved on (sometimes to his chagrin), invariably to impressive positions elsewhere in journalism, or in business or politics.

Newton was utterly dedicated to his work, taking a close interest in all aspects of the paper's editorial and design, in days when a smaller staff and tighter control made constant supervision possible. He kept to the now defunct tradition of demanding hard news, factual reporting and reasoned comment from versatile subs, reporters and leader writers; allied to this he had a sure instinct for what the common reader wanted or would tolerate, the common readers of the Financial Times in the 1950s being stockbrokers, forex dealers, small investors, company executives, people in government.

When quizzed, he would tap his teeth with his pen and say he saw his readers as "any man walking the pavement under St Paul's" (there was a superb view of St Paul's from the windows of his office in Bracken House, but he sat at his desk resolutely ignoring it, and facing the door). Even so, there was an element of mystery in his achievement and this encouraged all those who ever worked under him when they met each other subsequently to pass the time agreeably discussing what it really was that made him what he had been.

One of Newton's strange and unforgettable traits was the coming of marvellously apposite neologisms such as "helicopter", and arresting phrases such as "hang your horses a moment" (to a reporter in too much of a hurry), or "that's right up your pigeon" (to a deputy editor he was sending to a conference in Moscow) or "it's enough to give you ulcers", said in exasperation. Some of the quasi-malapropisms attributed to Newton are apocryphal but there are scores of genuine Newtonisms on the record.

This aspect of Gordon Newton, like the stories of a style of prudent hands-on editorship that embraced telling a leader writer some of his sentences were too long and some too short, or that he should add "or maybe not" to the end of his comment, served to soften his image as well as gladden the heart. But he was a tough and determined man who made some enemies, especially when he was fighting his corner early in his editorship, and whose philistinism hurt some of his more fastidious peers.

A perceptive profile of "L.G." (Leslie having been his unused Christian name) by his colleague and friend Sheila Black appeared in the Director magazine in October 1972, to mark his 65th birthday. It began: "He was a right bastard..." The bloody man too often turned out to be right, even when you knew he was wrong.



Newton in 1966, on the announcement of his knighthood

Press Association

"He knew what he didn't want..." It went on: "The paper's undoubted success has taken from him that constant need to fight and to push and to make others do the same. When he took over, it was a glorified trade paper... the average daily sale was 58,000 copies. Today it overshoots 108,000 and is still rising..."

This simple evidence of Newton's sound management - sales trebled - was also made possible through his ability to collaborate, sometimes stormily, with other remarkable men who created the modern Financial Times, especially the extraordinary Brendan Bracken, the shrewd advertisement director Sydney Henschel, and the clever

of The Times and the FT when it seemed possible that the Pearson group would buy the former. His plan in the end envisaged the FT absorbing The Times in a wonderful hybrid. Into his old age, Newton's opinions on the press and its handling of events, especially in the overlapping fields of economics, business, political were always worth hearing.

In retirement, sticking to his pipe of gin and tonic, still smoking cigarettes through his eighties, gradually becoming more and more blind but still enjoying fishing up to the end of 1994, Gordon Newton kept an unclouded mind and eager interest in public affairs, the Press and the progress of the Financial Times.

tranquil retirement with his wife at Henley-on-Thames, he relished his visits to London, above all to talk with the many successful people whose talent he had once fostered and whose careers he followed avidly, finally and judiciously.

Newton once wrote several chapters of the story of his own life but found no takers among the publishers; they were privately printed last year, entitled *A Peer without Equal*. It made a rather romantic story of a public schoolboy (Blandford) who had been good at sport, especially running, but wanted to be a surgeon or concert violinist, who'd read economics at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, before the slump ruined his father's glass business, and started his own firm making mirrors in Bethnal Green before going bust with a car accessory business and staying miserably and sometimes hungrily unemployed till he found a job on the old Financial News.

Commissioned in the Army during the Second World War, he turned down a "special mission" (as a German speaker) that would have meant his leaving the forces and this, Newton was convinced, was how in 1949 he was noticed - and remembered - by Brendan Bracken. After the war he had returned to the Financial News, which merged with the FT in 1945. He was features editor and leader writer; then spent a year as Lex before covering devaluation in Washington. When he became editor of the Financial Times Gordon Newton was a well-seasoned man.

GEORGE BULL

Leslie Gordon Newton, journalist; born 16 September 1907; Editor, Financial Times 1950-72; director 1967-72; K 1966; married 1935 Peggy Warren (died 1996; one son deceased); died Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire 31 August 1998.

When quizzed, he would tap his teeth with his pen and say he saw his readers as 'any man walking the pavement under St Paul's'

artistic Lord Moore (later Lord Droghe-da), whom he sometimes described as "my good" and with whom he had a fascinating, edgy, creative relationship that helped Droghe-da to emerge as a strong management impresario.

None the less, Newton was the genius and the driving force. I remember - before the FT was an international multi-edition paper - his asking Andrew Shonfield (one of his sharper critics) and me if we could guarantee half a page of foreign news each day using information from a news agency (Continent) and our few splendid foreign correspondents. Others recall the late nights he once spent seeing how best to make a combined paper

He could be harsh but he was never arrogant. "But I'm just a has-been," he said to a friend who was arranging a lunch between him and Rupert Murdoch, who had once enjoyed his company and advice. Although an eloquent and impressive speaker at the dinners given in his honour, in the editor's chair he avoided public attention. He was indeed rather a modest, rather an innocent man.

The latter proved to be the case just after his retirement when he took up a boardroom appointment to chair a company that went badly off the rails. Then, however, he went on to perform useful public service and add a commonsense component to several boards. Living in

FINANCIAL NOTES

ANDREW FREEMAN

Upside, Downside and a sense of regret

WHEN SWISS banks recently settled with Holocaust survivors, there was a sense that an episode of acute embarrassment for the banks was finally over. An important essence of this story went almost entirely unmentioned: that the Swiss banks had achieved one of the great risk management blunders of recent years. Given their behaviour during the Second World War it was perhaps impossible for them to escape some censure. But the extent of the vilification and the economic cost to their reputations; these could largely have been mitigated by better risk management.

We all face risk in our lives. Simplified, the Swiss banks faced a decision about risk which had much in common with humdrum issues that concern us as individuals. Should they settle or remain obdurate? How much insurance should we buy? What type of mortgage will work out best? Should we buy shares or bonds with a £5,000 windfall? Is it worth playing the National Lottery? We are constantly asking and answering such questions. When we decide, we more or less intuitively weigh our attitude to risk. If we feel risk-averse, then we will take the safer option, particularly if we cannot afford the costs of being wrong. In this sense, we place greater weight on the consequences of being wrong than we do on the chance of being wrong.

A few simple rules can help us to make better decisions by reducing our reliance on intuition. First, list the positive reasons for a decision - call this the "Upside". Then list the negatives, the "Downside" outcomes that could hurt you. Does the Upside clearly outweigh the Downside? If so, then you should make the decision. But there is an important twist to bear in mind. When things go wrong, we each suffer from regret. We need to factor our unique personal or professional regret into our decisions. This means thinking hard about what could go horribly wrong and seeking to avoid it.

Now apply this to the Swiss banks' dilemma when they were first aware during 1995/96 of a concerted effort to pursue the issue of Holocaust survivors' assets. They initially viewed their Downside as limited - hence their arrogant and dismissive attitude when American pressure was applied. Rather than graciously settle on a modest amount, the banks put their reputations at risk by



Is it worth playing the National Lottery?

arguing that the matter was closed for ever. Throughout 1996 they simply failed to see that a very nasty scenario was unfolding.

As protesters' voices grew louder, the banks' image began to slide. One bank was caught destroying potentially incriminating documents. Before too long, Swiss banks were being excluded from regular financial business with large US borrowers. Too late, they realised that their Downside was immense. Avoiding a settlement had exposed them to reputational and financial losses that could run into billions. Small wonder that they eventually agreed to hand over more than \$1bn in compensation.

Large institutions as well as individuals can get simple risk calculations badly wrong. But, with a better set of tools for analysing decisions which expose us to risk, we can all get more to grips with this most slippery of dangers. Using Upside and Downside tempered by our unique sense of regret will not allow us to avoid bad things altogether. Things will always go wrong in life. But we can at least feel better protected against disaster.

Andrew Freeman is co-author, with Ron Dembo, of *Seeing Tomorrow: rewriting the rules of risk* (Wiley, £19.99)

Poor old Charlie Glass, not the hero Ollie was

THE INDEPENDENT
ARCHIVE
3 SEPTEMBER 1987

If Charles Glass really is a hero, why are Americans so reluctant to recognise him as such? asks Alexander Chancellor

kidnapping in a part of Beirut supposedly under their control. By the end of that day the idea that Mr Glass had not escaped but had been somehow prised out of captivity had become almost universally accepted as the truth. So suspicious of Mr Glass had everybody become that Dan Rather, the anchorman on CBS television's evening news and, according to opinion polls, the most trusted man in America, described Mr Glass as "a young American who says he was a hostage", thus appearing even to doubt the reality of his kidnapping.

As Mr Rather had taken part in various private initiatives aimed at winning his release there is no reason to believe that this is what he meant. He tells me that there was never any question in his mind that Mr Glass was a genuine hostage. But those ill-chosen words uttered at a moment of confusion when every statement about Mr Glass seemed to require qualification, may have been decisive in conveying the idea to the American public that there was something fishy about him.

Nothing has been said since then to alter the impression that Mr Glass was uniquely fortunate among American hostages in having the Syrians on his side. It is, therefore, with great satisfaction that I am able to report that an analysis conducted within the State Department concluded that he definitely escaped, and did so without outside help. Investigators have found not a shred of evidence to indicate that the Syrians contributed in practice to his escape. But they have received evidence to show that his captors were very surprised when they awoke to find that he was no longer there.

So if, as now seems certain, Mr Glass really is a hero, why are the Americans so reluctant to recognise him as such? There are various possible reasons. One is that Mr Glass, as a well-known Palestinian sympathiser, is considered politically unsound. Others could be that he is half-Lebanese, lives in London and is married to an Englishwoman. And there has been undisputed irritation in Washington over the fact that he went to Lebanon without US government permission, thus exposing himself to the danger that subsequently befell him.

But no explanation can really justify the manner in which he has been treated. He suffered fearful hardship in captivity and displayed both awesome courage and devilish ingenuity in his escape. He has deserved a great deal better than he has got.

From 'Out of the West' on the Foreign News pages of The Independent, Thursday 3 September 1987

GAZETTE

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Gloucester opens the Society of Model and Experimental Engineers (SMEE) Centenary Exhibition at Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In memoriam) are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Geoff Arnold, cricketer, 54; Air Marshal Sir Erik Bennett, former commander, Sultan of Oman's Air Force, 70; Dr Clare Burstall, psychologist and educationist, 67; Miss Pauline Collins, actress, 58; Mr Michael Connarty MP, 51; Professor Raymond Cowell, Vice-Chancellor, Nottingham Trent University, 61; Mr Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, president of Tunisia, 62; The Hon James Elles, MP, 49; Mr Nick Gibb MP, 38; Professor Peter Goddard, Master, St John's College, Cambridge, 53; Mrs Teresa Gorman MP, 67; The Rev Anthony Harbottle, former chaplain to the Queen, 73; Mr Nicky Horne, disc jockey, 48; Mr Graham Kentfield, chief cashier, Bank of England, 58; Mr

BIRTHDAYS

Brian Lochore, rugby player, 58; Professor Alison Laurie, writer and Professor of English, Cornell University, United States, 72; Mr Richard McCormac, architect and former president, Royal Institute of British Architects, 60; Miss Susan Millan, flautist, 51; Sir Michael Neuberger, former MP, 65; Mr John Orr, chief constable, Strathclyde, 55; Sir Mark Russell, chairman, Commonwealth Institute, Scotland, 68; Mr Charlie Sheen, actor, 33; Mr Gaston Thorn, former prime minister of Luxembourg, 70.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Joseph Wright, painter, 1794; Jean-Joseph Marie-Anguste Jaures, socialist writer and speaker, 1859; Alan Ladd, actor, 1913.

Deaths: Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector, 1658; Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev, playwright, 1883; e.e. cummings (Edward Estlin Cummings), poet, 1962; Frederick Louis MacNiece, poet and playwright, 1963; Ho Chi Minh, president of North Vietnam, 1969; Frank Capra, writer and film director, 1991.

On this day: the Royal British Bank failed, with debts of over £500,000, 1856; the Princess Alice, a pleasure boat, collided with the Bywell Castle and sank in the Thames with the loss of over 650 lives, 1878; Sir Malcolm Campbell set up a land speed record of 801.13 mph, 1935; Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, 1899.

Today is the Feast Day of St Alguir or Agoul of Lerins, St

Cuthbert, St Gregory the Great, St Hildelitha, St Macaninus, St Phoebe, St Remachus and St Simeon Stylites the Younger.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Alexander Sturge, 'Reflections (I): Impressions of the Seine', 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Pat Earnshaw, '19th- and 20th-century Hand-made Laces', 2pm. Tate Gallery: Julia Tozer, 'Gustav Klimt and the Portrait of Hermine Gallia', 1pm. British Museum: Timothy Clark, 'Buddhist Arts of the Edo Period: paintings and prints', 11.30am. National Portrait Gallery: Rosemary Kelly, 'A Mirror of the Soul? Portraits of Richard III', 1.10pm.

AS ALL collectors of useless information know, facetious and obnoxious are the only common words that contain all five vowels in their correct order, and only one of each. But what about the uncommon words? I have trawled through the OED and found another 15 words sharing the same property.

WORDS

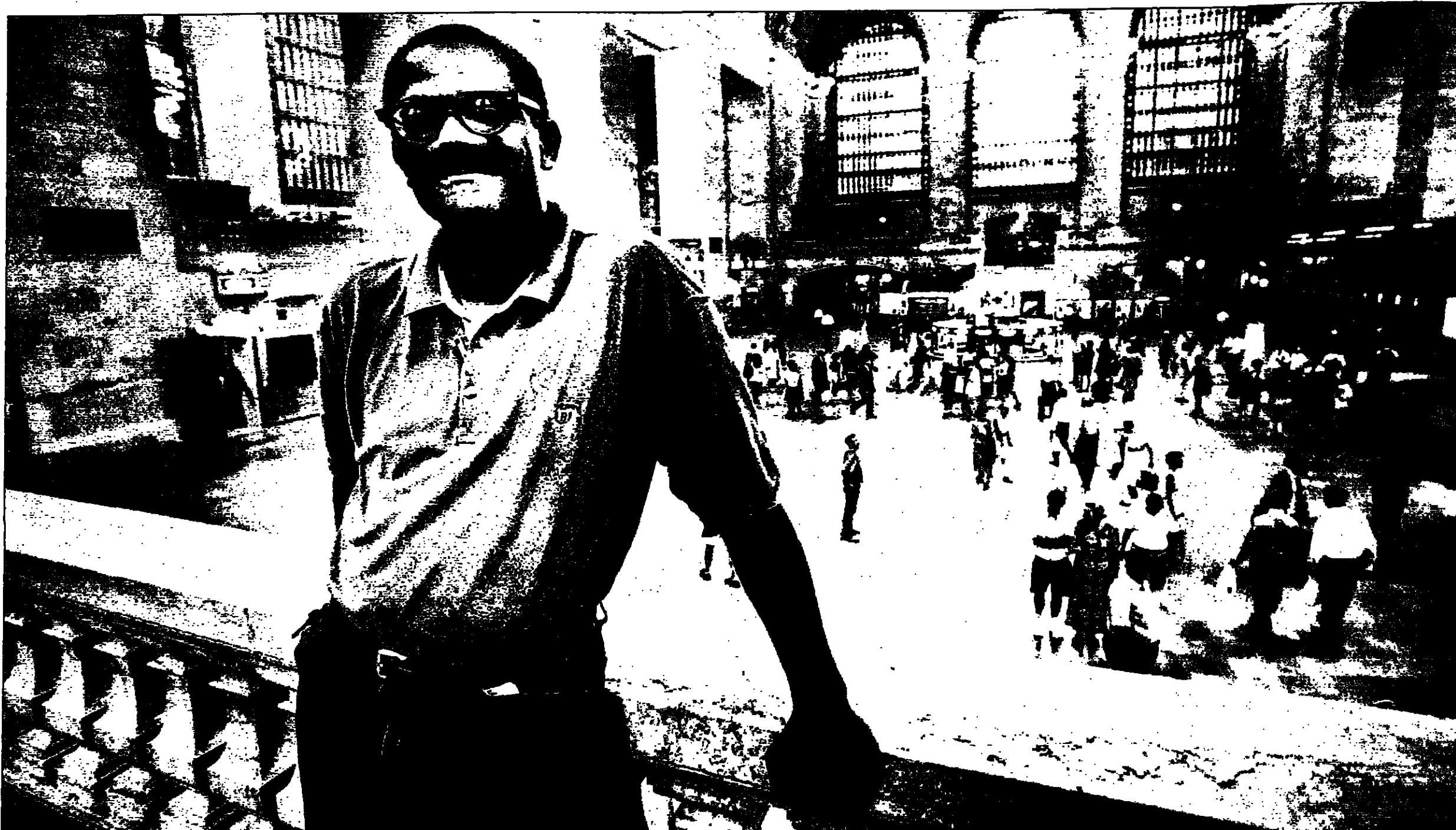
WILLIAM HARTSTON
acheilous, adj.

Acheilous is the first and most pleasing of them (even if the dictionary suggests that achilous is a better way to spell it). It means "without a lip".

Adventious (the same as adventitious), acervous (airy), affectuous and anemious are all rare, arsenious is chemical and arterious is archaic, but I could see myself working acervous into a conversation if I ever needed a word for bluish or greyish green. To neglect such a word would be tragic.

The pen is mightier than the rock

Lee Stringer spent 12 years on the New York streets as a crack addict. Then he got hooked on words. By Damian Fowler



The writer Lee Stringer stands proud in Grand Central Station, a place where he spent 10 years sleeping in a crawl hole, his head inches away from the railtracks

Jeff Christiansen

Lee Stringer was having a bad day. He was uptown and desperate to score some crack-cocaine when he heard gunfire. Five shots to the head of the drug dealer, delivered at close range. The killers ran away. For a moment, the delicious anticipation of his next high was shocked into submission as he stared down at the dying man.

This was one of the more dramatic incidents Lee Stringer witnessed during his 12 years living on the streets of New York City. Back then, he was an invisible man; a mute onlooker to this casual murder. Now this tall, soft-spoken man who loomed along unnoticed is suddenly in the literary spotlight. What he saw from the fringes of society is the subject of his new book, *Grand Central Winter*, a memoir from the deepest trenches of homelessness. The 47-year-old Stringer

has received lavish praise from the eminent American author, Kurt Vonnegut, who hailed him as a "storyteller of the first rank". He's been courted by the media and toasted at Manhattan book parties. It is an unlikely reversal of fortune for a man who, until recently, was a homeless crackhead.

But *Grand Central Winter* is not about homelessness, says Stringer. "I see it as more of a book about the Eighties. We read and heard about what a lot of the big guys were doing. But there were things happening out on the street that were happening out of the same sort of despair."

His descent started 12 years ago with personal tragedy. Depressed at the deaths of his business partner, with whom he co-owned a graphic arts company, and his brother, Stringer slipped easily into depression, drink and drugs. The first time he smoked crack he vividly recalled in his memoir: "It is a taste

I know I am going to love. The taste of success, love, orgasm, omnipotence, immortality, and winning the lottery all rolled into one."

Soon, the drugs were all-consuming and he found himself evicted from his apartment, down-and-out on the streets of New York. "Only instead of feeling put out, I feel strangely relieved, elated even," he wrote in his book. "I have just been released, I realise, from all earthly claims upon me. There is nothing any more that I am obliged to do. No one any more that I am required to be."

By day, he collected empty soft-drink cans for money to feed his crack habit. Then at night, he'd bed down in a crawl space underneath Grand Central Station, his head inches away from the track. This was his home for nearly 10 years.

It was here that Stringer found a pencil that changed his life. He started scribbling in an old composition book. "At first it just took me

out of my immediate circumstances, nothing else could do that," says Stringer, adjusting his thick, black-framed glasses.

"Writing not only took me out of it, it enabled me to deal with it in a constructive way, in a non-overwhelming way. So in that respect it had a pay-off and in that respect it was very addictive."

That's how writing slowly came to replace crack as an addiction. Soon, he began writing for a paper called *Street News*, the New York equivalent of London's *The Big Issue*. The idea behind *Street News* was to encourage the homeless to produce and sell their own newspaper, allowing them to keep the profits on every copy they sold.

For Stringer, this was the forum he needed. As a regular columnist on the paper, known as "Homey", he realised his redemption lay in writing. Not only that, the newspaper's office had a soft couch which was somewhat more comfortable than

Track 109 in Grand Central. Then, fate took a hand when publisher Dan Simon got stuck between stations in the subway. To kill time, he picked up a copy of *Street News* and read it cover-to-cover. One of Stringer's columns in the paper caught his eye. Impressed by the graceful and witty writing, the publisher subsequently offered Stringer a book contract and a tempting advance of \$3,000, soon spent on crack. But that was the beginning of the end of Stringer's crack addiction.

"I wasn't going to go any further and still be an active cocaine crackhead," he says. He entered a drug treatment programme, which took him 18 months to complete. Stringer has supplanted his pencil with an old Mac Classic. He is impassioned with writing. His whole body rocks with animation as he describes his new daily fix: words. "It's almost like being in a zone," he says. "It's almost like taking dictation. When it's like that, oh, it's great.

It's the greatest feeling in the world. It's like being touched by God. When Lee Stringer talks about success, he does so with the knowing smile of a man who has stared down hopelessness and survived. "As far as I define 'success', to me it's having a healthy relationship towards life and the world. So success started when I not only stopped doing drugs but began to do the inside work that needs to be done," he says, gesturing towards his heart.

Lee Stringer is no longer an invisible man. Amongst the crowds of Grand Central Station where his loneliness was once thrown into relief, he weaves his way across the newly-renovated concourse. People who might previously have ignored this towering black man, now recognise him and ask for his autograph.

This great American terminal was the starting point for his odyssey into homelessness, addiction and back to his new life as a writer. Ironically, the 12 years that

Stringer spent wearing out his shoes on the street, collecting cans, scoring crack, jumping subway turnstiles and telling his story to the world, with a uniquely-felt body of material. One reviewer called it "memoirs from the abject poor."

Stringer talks about his life on the street without bitterness. "Being homeless and being ignored and being passed by gives you a good vantage point to be an observer," he says. His experience has also given him a strong empathy with those who are still out on the streets living through their own *Grand Central Winter*.

"I know the pain," he says. "So, when you're in the thick of it, you're in pain but you don't know it. Or that pain has become totally acceptable to your psyche."

'Grand Central Winter' is published this month by Seven Stories Press, price £13.99

Mum and Dad don't approve of a gap year

WHAT VIRGINIA SAYS

I wonder what it is that makes Geri's parents so panicky? Were they themselves denied any further education and feel, like starving children, that you must snap up what's on offer in case it mysteriously disappears next year? Or is Geri an only child, whom they want to keep tabs on for as long as they can? If she goes to university now, at least they'll have her back in the holidays for the next three years. At least they'll be able to ring her every night. It sounds as if not only are they tremendously insecure themselves, but they are also insecure about Geri's own maturity.

But of course she should go travelling now if she can afford it. She's spent a whole gruelling lifetime at school, and to go straight from school to university, unless there's no alternative, has lots of disadvantages. She'd probably take with her a school mentality, in other words a "do as little as possible and then only to get through exams" attitude to learning.

If she goes abroad for a while, she'll be able to come to university from a different angle, and see it not as school but as further education, some-

thing that she could enjoy and appreciate.

Then, if she goes away now, she'll meet people of her own age. If she goes later, she'll be in with an entirely different crowd. Pre-university people look after each other when they're backpacking around the world, and have a great time seeing new things.

And finally, if she goes round the world after university, she'll be a year late in applying for jobs. And she'll be doing it on her own, having lost touch with so many university companions who could have helped her in the work market. Not only that, but she'll probably be saddled with the debt of a student loan; not an ideal time to take a carefree trip.

My son went travelling to India and Nepal before university. He set off as a schoolboy and came back as a seasoned traveller, far better able to cope with university than if he'd gone straight up. He knew how to shop and to cook and how to find better rooms, and generally how to survive, far better than those who had come straight from home. It means that he got far more out of the place than the others. While dozens of school-

leavers were spending every night drinking in those awful competitions called boat-races and competing with each other as to how many pints they could down, he felt he'd been there, done that. There was no sense of "now I'm at university I'll go stark, staring bonkers" about it all.

And, sorry to sound so po-faced, but it's true that there's nothing like coming across a few limble beggars covered with sores to make you realise how incredibly lucky you are to be going to university. It suddenly becomes not some ghastly three-year extension of school; it becomes a privilege.

Geri should show her maturity now by putting her foot down and saying that she's going abroad, whether her parents like it or not. When she does this she may find that their true anxieties come spilling out, which she can deal with one at a time. She can reassure them that she'll ring them every week, if possible; she can get all her jobs and buy her anti-Aids kit. She may reassure them by cutting Bosnia and Albania off her list to visit, and go to Australia or India instead. She'll have a great time. And she'll grow up fast.

DILEMMAS



VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

Geri's got a place at university, but first wants to take a year off going round the world. Her education-mad parents think she should take up the place now and go round the world later. What should she do?

Take a gap year. A year off is fine, so long as it stretches your psyche as well as providing an escape route from your present stale patch. Domestic help to a rich American family could numb your intellect for ever.

A year working with the disabled or refugees could dramatically recharge your emotional batteries.

If you have the courage to backpack abroad, you'll enjoy showing initiative and resourcefulness; you'll probably have to take some seedy jobs along the way but will return enlightened. JOYCE EXLEY, Liverpool

Your parents will benefit. My 19-year-old daughter has almost completed a gap year which she was actively encouraged to take by her father and myself. She has travelled to India, had two office jobs and two catering jobs, saved money, and travelled for three months in Europe. For us the year has been a chance to enjoy the company of a delightful young woman without exams looming. Since she was 14 the major focus of her life

has been school and exams.

This is perhaps the last chance your daughter will have to take a little time for herself, to grow up and develop with your support. TESSA MITCHELL, Cambridge

Make sure you have a plan I am coming to the end of my gap year, during which I travelled extensively. Taking a year off shows commitment to study. On returning you

will unquestionably be more mature and in fact probably be keener to study.

However, ensure you have plans. How are you funding the year? Where and why do you want to travel? You may find it harder to go away after university; act on your enthusiasm. Go, go, go! CATHERINE

A year off gives insight Geri has the right idea. I didn't start my degree until I

was 25 and it has given me insight against which to measure the values in the work of people I am studying. Younger students seem to be more passive, or critical in a fashionable, blinkered way. I am on no treadmill and my academic life is intensely personal. Perhaps Geri's parents didn't go to university, or did and don't realise that they could have made even more of it. LEE WILSON, Kent

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia, My mother died on the same day as Diana last year, and I can't tell you how distressing I found it. Even the funeral was on the same day, and I was horrified how few people came because they were watching Diana's funeral on television. I felt that my personal grief was completely overwhelmed by the grief for the Princess. With all the recent publicity about Diana, I feel surges of the same fury, and impotence. Has anyone else been in the same position? How did they

cope? And how can I cope, year after year? Tina

Letters are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora. Send comments and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, Features Department, 'The Independent', 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail: dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving your postal address for sending a bouquet.

Job prospects are improved Having spent my gap year teaching English in China I would summarise the most important reasons to take this year off:

1. It is more difficult to travel for a year when burdened by debts and trying to get into the competitive graduate job market.
2. The experience gained is invaluable for graduate jobs - these days, a good degree is just not enough.
3. What else will you put on application forms when they ask about your greatest achievement to date?

ANDREA, Ashford, Kent



Word association? Men: 'breasts, bosoms, black, just another thing to get in the way, prostitute.' Women: 'pink and pointy, expensive, uncomfortable.' The bra is as much fantasy as a piece of clothing. By Annalisa Barbieri

Garment of earthly delight



Fullon Getty/Advertising Archive

In Italy, *la roba intima* is kept behind the counter, appropriately enough in drawers. There will be a few examples on display to tempt you: the fine woollen undergarments of *la nonna* and some pretty bra and pantie combinations. It was in such a shop in southern Italy that I stood two years ago, my aim to buy a La Perla bra. The shop assistant took out tissue-lined box after box, inserting her hand into the cup to show me the bra's gossamer fineness. But all the samples offered were white, cream, or in a new colour called champagne.

"Do you have it in black?" I asked. The woman scuttled off into the back, whispering heavily to assistants and her husband. "Lo vuole in nero," she said, clapping her fingers together and hunching her shoulders to her ears. Then, hiding their embarrassment, they continued to serve me in the overly expansive fashion usually reserved for people who have just told you they are homosexual.

The black bras (plus suspenders, which I had not asked for) were brought out, while the rest of the shop gathered round to look. Silly me. In parts of Italy, a black bra means you are either recently widowed or the sort of woman that pasta sauces are named after.

The bra. Like a film screen, a thousand fantasies are projected on to it. Whether in its incarnation as a plunge, balcony, sports, peep-hole or everyday bra, it is no longer just a garment. Although it seems for ever that we have been subjected to bras on every media street corner, it is only during this decade that the bra has come out of the comfortable, private place it used to occupy in women's magazines where it was advertised discreetly, like sanitary towels.

Wonderbra were the first to take the bra to where everyone saw it: on billboards, just four years ago. Like

a lucky and eager understudy, the bra did not miss its moment. Once in the limelight, once it had tasted fame, the previously humble bra threw off its shy colours of ivory or Gernolene pink and started making appearances on every magazine cover and going out on its own. As it did so, the bra made its mark in the wet cement of popular culture and began to mean different things to different people – hence its versatility, appeal and saleability.

The bra may enhance its wearer, support her, protect her, plump up her breasts or play them down; it may even cheat for her, but let us not forget that it also sells everything from cars to posh-wank magazines such as *Loaded*. No other garment is this hard-working or powerful. The bra should run for president.

So what does the bra mean to people? What has it come to represent? Market research is phooey and a waste of time. You just need to play good, old-fashioned word association to see the varying reactions it gets. "If I say the word 'bra' to you, what immediately comes to mind?" I asked a selection of people. Embarrassment, delight, groans, half-smiles and thousand-yard stares preceded answers.

There was a clear divide between the sexes. Men (after a dreamy smile had left their lips): "Breasts, tits, more bras, bosoms, black, just another thing to get in the way, heaving breasts barely contained by a lacy bra and... prostitute." Women: "Pink and pointy. Forties bras, lacy breasts, under-wear drawer, expensive, M&S, Rigby and Peller, support, uncomfortable and Bentley Rhythm Ace."

Social commentator and management consultant Peter York (word association reply: "Last year's news") agrees that the bra is no longer a functional object. "It was a functional garment that has had value added to it by its makers. They made it visible, sexy, and a cultural object," Dominica D'Amico, editorial di-

rector of *Campaign* (word association reply: "Wonderbra") thinks the bra today symbolises "women's growing sense of ease with themselves. The bra has gone from a dull but necessary purchase to an exciting and personally enhancing one that women can use to express their personality and their mood."

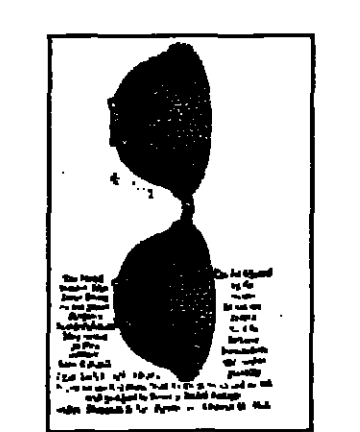
Oh yes, if headlines are indicative of the nation's economy, a woman's cleavage is the barometer of her state of mind. Kim Rawlings, editor of the trade magazine *Contours* (word association: "Madonna") is more practical: "The bra today means freedom-giving. Women used to see it as something that oppressed them, mostly because bras, especially before elastic, were uncomfortable. Today, properly fitted, it is like a second skin."

British *Vogue's* editor, Alex Shulman ("Colour"), does not think it means very much more than its native definition: "I'm a woman, so the bra is just something to make my bosom look better. Bra advertising may have become a sociological thing, but the bra, per se, doesn't mean anything other than it's a bra."

Those responsible for the image that bras project are, naturally, more effusive. The bra, it seems, is imbued with positive messages. Victor Crawford, marketing manager for Playtex and Wonderbra ("Wonderbra") thinks that today the bra represents "an item that allows a woman to express herself. In our 'Hello Boys' campaign, Eva Herzigova was saying, 'I need me. I don't need you.'"

For presumably being the boys who no doubt interpreted the message somewhat differently. Photographer Valerie Phillips ("Oranges") who has just shot Triumph's latest campaign, due out this autumn, thinks this is a really difficult question: "God, it means so many things to different people. People go out wearing them on show if they want to, or they wear them because they are sexy and beautiful, because

to begin to understand the bra a little better we need to look at its past form. The idea of something to cover the breasts was invented by the spoilsport Greeks in the fourth century AD; it was spookily similar to the bandeau tops that are so fashionable today, even though they give you a silhouette like a sausage. But the bra as we know it now – two separate containers, one for each breast – was invented in 1913 by Mary Phelps Jacob (who later gave herself the rather fancier name of



Early versions of the bra 'created fictitious charms and thus improved the work of nature'

Caresse Crosby). Mary's bra was fashioned rather crudely out of two handkerchiefs.

Some 30 years before this, however, the seeds for the bra were already being sown. Then, a corset would be worn under the corset to cover the breasts. By the middle of the 18th century these corsets, grandmothers to the bra and obviously where the *chickie* gene came from, started getting special and be-

came known as bust bodices. They became boned and adorned with adjustable tapes so that the woman could, with a pull here and a knot there, choose the dimensions of her breast. These must have been joyous times.

For the flatter-chested woman, there was also a forerunner to the Wonderbra: bust bodices would have pockets into which the woman could slip a little helping pad, or she could pin a spill of lace frills to the front of her bust bodice. One woman of the time, when asked what size her bust was going to be for a dance, was reported as saying: "That would depend on who my partner was." A foxy chick, and an early hint that here was a garment that women could use to give them confidence and employ to their advantage.

Then, as now, this was closely followed by controversy. In the 1840s, *The Handbook of the Toilet* lamented the use of "lennon bosoms and many other means of creating fictitious charms and improving the work of nature". Talk some gentlemen were being duped. Bad bra!

The early Twenties were all about flattening the bust, but by the decade's end, the fashion for a boyish shape – thank God – was starting to give way to women's curves and the bra started to become sexy. They were still curious little things, though (remember, synthetic, stretchy fibres had not made an appearance yet), made of cotton or silk and with no give at all. But what fun women were having with them!

Again, this jolliness was closely followed by consternation and the bra was associated with the delicious wantonness that 70 years on would sell so much. In a 1929 issue of the glamourously entitled *Tallor and Cutter*, an article yacks on that the "sights that are thrust upon the sons of men are enough to stifle young love and drive romance away". The bra was making a name for itself.

The bra made a run for freedom in the Forties and Fifties – decades that gave us the sweater girl, pointy

conical bras (created by circular stitching and made famous again in the Eighties by Madonna), the padded bra and the under-wired bra.

A few words here about the under-wired bra. There have been reports on under-wired bras just recently that they give you back problems, restrict your diaphragm by several centimetres, and hence your breathing. This is not the fault of the under-wired bra – a marvellous garment that can round up a woman's breasts and sculpt them to almost unimaginable proportions while still supporting her – but of women who wear bras in the wrong size, which most women do. Hence the appearance of strange women on the streets with what seem like four breasts.

Even more ridiculously, the bra came under attack again three years ago in a book that said wearing a bra could kill you by restricting the effective drainage of the lymphatic system and thereby giving you breast cancer. The lengths some men will go to to see an unfettered breast under an angora sweater! Then, as now, I checked this out with Dr Trevor Powles, head of the Breast Unit at the Royal Marsden, and it is just not true.

"Microwaves and the M1 are much more dangerous than under-wired bras but people still use them," laughs Aliza Reger, chief executive (and daughter) of Janet Reger ("Drawful"). "The only time an under-wired bra is bad for you is when it's not fitted properly," says Jill Kanton ("Support"), daughter of the famous June and manageress of Rigby & Peller in London's Knightsbridge. "And wearing one regularly when you're pregnant, because your breasts are constantly changing and the bra won't fit properly."

Now where were we? The Stidies. Young women wanted their bras to look different from their mother's, which were still in white or cream. So bras became navy red, spotty, different. This was also the time that

Triumph, today famous for their "Bra for the way you are" catchphrase, had some hilarious ads running that showed a woman standing next to a fireman – "Undies to be caught in", and with a doctor – "Undies to be examined in". Fantastically non-PC.

But it was in the Eighties and Nineties that the bra really went for it. Madonna showed hers off and women started wearing bras to show, and not just to support, in an ugly little fashion called "wearing your bra – and just your bra – under your power suit." "Before this," says Reger, "the bra was tucked away. God forbid you showed a bra-strap, or a bit of lace from your bra peeked out."

And we are back to the beginning with Wonderbra and their big posters, a campaign that on the one hand we have to thank because it gave bras a starring role and with this came more awareness of properly fitting bras and a better range of sizes. But on the other hand we have this campaign to blame because the bra will not now go away. If it is not careful, it will have no mystery or allure left and its very name will come to mean nothing more than "overkill". Like Gary Oldman, it will have turned up one too many times. "The word 'bra-strap'," says York, "should have the same excitement that it used to have when you were a teenage boy. But it doesn't." Although Shulman thinks older men are still "really intrigued by seeing a bra-strap".

I must leave the final word to a female reader of a newspaper who wrote in to express her opinions during the great bra ad debate of a few years ago ("These ads are degrading to women, they exploit them, etc"). Her word association sounded an early warning bell for the bra: "There is nothing wrong with a woman in a bra with a catchy slogan. There are other adverts that are more tacky, like the Pot Noodle ones." Bra – Pot Noodle. There can be no greater shame.

Return to sender

Adopting a child from eastern Europe appeals to many in the West. But when two US couples had problems with their orphans, they simply flew back to Hungary and dumped them. By Adam LeBor

It's a warm, early autumn day in the Hungarian village of Gyongosbalsz. The sun is shining down on the quiet, tree-lined street, the only sounds the barking of the Huszar family dog and the hum of distant traffic. Inside the spick and span family home, the table is set with bowls of fruit and piles of freshly made cakes and biscuits. A massive garden lies the house, filled with eminently climbable fruit trees. Ripe plums cover the soft earth. It seems a perfect place to grow up.

But Gabor Lakatos, officially known as Robert Gabriel Petrosino, former resident of Connecticut and the newest addition to the Huszar household, is suspicious of any official-sounding visitors. He beckons me outside his foster-parents' house. "I know what you want here; I know what you are going to say," he says, looking hard at me with his intelligent brown eyes, just like any nine-year-old, but one especially distrustful of strangers. "You're going to say that I stole things, aren't you," he says accusingly. "That's what you want here."

Well, no. What I want at the Huszar household is to find out how Gabor - or Robert - a lively boy who climbs trees like Tarzan and high-fives like any all-American kid, could have been adopted by an American family called Petrosino, and taken to live with them in Connecticut.

That is, at least until March 1998 when they tired of him, and their legal responsibilities. Mr and Mrs Petrosino flew back to Hungary with Gabor, checked into the Hyatt for three weeks with their American lawyer, then finally dumped him at a Budapest orphanage, with a bag of clothes and a single toy.

After he was abandoned Gabor used to draw pictures of his adoptive father. In the pictures they were always close together. But Gabor will probably never see the Petrosinos again. Neither he, nor Hungarian child welfare officials, have heard a word from them since.

For the social workers and child psychologists who organised the adoption of Gabor Lakatos, a Hungarian Roma (Gypsy) child, the Petrosino family seemed a perfect choice. Both parents are teachers, with reasonable incomes, who could offer a child from a deprived family background the chance of a new life.

Like many other Western parents who want to adopt children, they had turned to eastern Europe in their search. They wanted a baby, or at least a small child; but after meeting Gabor, they eventually decided to accept him.

All the usual, rigorous adoption procedures were followed, and Gabor Lakatos became a full, legal member of the Petrosino family. The parents understood that Gabor

was from a fractured family background, and had been raised in institutions and foster families, said Dr Magdolna Nagy, head of the county's child protection service.

"The parents were told that he was from a foster home. Adopting a child from an institution is not the same as taking one who has lived in a family. They didn't give enough time either to the child, or to themselves. Now they want to prove that they tried everything, but they didn't love him as their own. They were told that he was not a baby, and that adopting would take time. Despite all this, they agreed to take him."

Now the all-American dream has turned sour. The Petrosinos have applied to the Hungarian courts to have the adoption annulled, using a loophole in Hungarian law that allows for cancellation in such cases.

They have been joined by a second family, the Harpers, also of Connecticut. The Harpers adopted Karolyi Baranyi, now legally known as Jeremy Harper, in September 1996. Two days after the Petrosinos abandoned Gabor, in what seems to have been a co-ordinated action the Harpers flew into Budapest and dumped Karolyi.

"The whole two-year experience must have been very damaging. The children say they were sent back to Hungary as a punishment, because they did something wrong. They were not physically assaulted, but they were definitely not loved, and a sense of guilt was created in them," says Dr Nagy.

"They were told that they were naughty, that they couldn't learn English; and were generally made to feel guilty. Their mental state is better now, but they are unwilling to discuss their experiences in America. One of the children hid himself in the toilet at McDonald's. The parents claimed this was a symptom of abnormal behaviour; but you don't have to be an expert, just a parent, to see that this was a cry for help."

The Petrosinos and Harpers were just two couples in a wave of prospective adoptive parents who poured into post-Communist eastern Europe after the collapse of Communism in 1989. Heart-rending pictures of abandoned orphans in state-run orphanages filled the world's media, attracting the interest of those parents who could not find children to adopt in the west.

Countries such as Hungary and Romania are still popular choices for adoptive parents. International adoption is a lucrative business. More than a dozen agencies advertise children for adoption on the Internet, including pictures and potted biographies of the youngsters. Pages on the World Wide Web are jammed with travel tips for visits to eastern Europe, and in-depth psychological briefings on the likely prob-

lems of taking on such children.

But not all would-be parents care about potential problems. Some see the post-Communist countries as a giant baby bazaar where they can pick their dream child, perhaps even trying to bribe welfare officials to hand over a baby, which they will then attempt to smuggle abroad.

At the same time, eastern European child welfare officials with an idealised view of life in a modern capitalist society often feel that their charges will have a better chance of life in western Europe or the US.

Hungary is now, in most respects, a developed, Western-style country, but many here still view America as the golden land of opportunity. Laszlo Petrovics-Ofner, a psychologist, says: "They often idealise America... as a wonderland of big cars and endless chocolate bars. They think the material richness there can give the children a better life than they would have in Hungary."

Both sets of parents, the Petrosinos and the Harpers, did everything they could for Gabor and Karolyi, says Istvan Fekete, their Budapest lawyer, but ultimately the culture clash was too great.

"The families gave them everything they could, emotionally and financially. But they didn't understand what it means to grow up as these children did, and they took on something they couldn't handle. Nobody explained to them how difficult it would be to integrate the children."

The children stole, were aggressive at school and attacked their teachers and classmates, claims Fekete, and when they were invited to classmates' birthday parties the hosts asked their parents not to bring them again.

Visits to school psychologists, outside professional help, even the families' Catholic priests did not help. The final straw was when the children claimed at school that they had been beaten by their adoptive parents, drawing the attention of American child welfare authorities.

"Both families tried everything to make it work, and they thought it would get better eventually. By that stage the Petrosinos were frightened that they could lose all their children, and they got on the first plane to Budapest."

Whatever the truth of the adoptive families' allegations, it is clear that both Gabor and Karolyi have been severely traumatised. It will take years before these two boys, who have zig-zagged between foster and adoptive parents, Hungary and the United States, will ever feel safe and secure anywhere.

"All children from state-run homes have problems, but these two are not particularly difficult," says Dr Nagy. "I don't understand why these parents felt they had to give up. How could they decide that the

children are abnormal and impossible? I find this shameful.

About 1,500 Hungarian children have been adopted by foreign couples in the last ten years. Several, such as the two boys, are from Roma (Gypsy) families. But as bad as anti-Roma prejudice is in Hungary, the children would have been better off staying in their own country. The cruellest cut of all for a child is to provide him with a home and then expel him from it, says Dr Laszlo Petrovics-Ofner.

"This is the act of someone who sees the child as a commodity, as a little toy, rather than as a person. It is terribly damaging for a child to become a commodity to be traded back and forth, especially at this age,

which is a milestone in a child's development. Love is the basis for a healthy childhood, material conditions are an aside."

Gabor doesn't talk much about his time in Connecticut now. He is settling down in Gyongosbalsz, and seems to be enjoying life with his foster parents. Aranka, his 14-year-old half-sister, is there as well, and the two siblings spend much of their time together.

Gabor craves love and affection, says his foster-mother, Ida Huszar. He certainly enjoys posing for the camera: climbing and jumping off trees like a natural model.

"He is so grateful when someone shows him affection. He very tense and nervous when he got here, al-

ways running around and couldn't sit still. Now he is gradually getting back to normal, playing football like any healthy child."

Half an hour's drive away from the Huszar household, not far from the city of Eger, Karolyi Baranyi is now living with his foster-family, the Varadys. Karolyi, two years older than Gabor, is a quiet child. He admits that he misses his adopted family, especially his grandmother and his brother Jonathan.

"I feel fine here, but America was good as well. I used to go to Grandma's house and help her with the cooking; she always gave me sweets and bananas. I liked my parents - they took me on trips. I had a brother, Jonathan, and we used to go out cycling. I miss them sometimes."

Like Gabor, Karolyi was extremely unsettled when he arrived at his foster home. Now he has settled down, but is still very insecure, says Aranka Varady, fearing that he could be taken away again.

"He is worried about security. He keeps asking me where he lives, and he frets about the future. He is constantly afraid that if someone new comes here they are coming for him. I try to tell him there is nothing to worry about, show him love, and let him know that this is his place."

As for the children themselves, Karolyi at least is planning his future. "When I grow up I will go first to Budapest, and then to America. I liked America."

For Gabor - aka Robert - the journey to a comfortable home in Connecticut ended in disaster

Andreea Anca-Strauss



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ROBERT THOMAS DAVIES
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M.R. DORRINGTON, Liquidator

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POETIC LICENCE

UP UP AND AWAY BY MARTIN NEWELL ILLUSTRATION: SHANE MCGOWAN

Two Canadian "Top Gun" pilots fired over 1000 rounds of ammunition at a rogue weather balloon last week but failed to shoot it down. This week, after losing height and drifting over Greenland, the blimp eventually came down somewhere in the Arctic.

Over grainlands, lakes and prairies
Eastbound out of Saskatoon
Bigger than St Paul's cathedral
One Canadian Met. balloon
Helium-filled and v. expensive
Perfect in design and stitch
Up until the thing goes awol
Due to some equipment glitch
Off across the North Atlantic
Clogging up the day-flight lanes
Goes the blimp, until two pilots
Shoot at it from fighter planes

Pride of the Canadian Air Force
Loosing off a thousand rounds
Fail to down a sailing target
Wider than five football grounds
Twice as tall as Nelson's Column
Hanging there serene, surreal



Back at base and post-debriefing
Wonder how those pilots feel?
Having lost their Top Gun trophies
As their colleagues give them stick
While the source of all their sorrow
Sashays on past Keflavik

Drifting, dropping over Greenland
'Til the errant rogue balloon
Comes in range of Inuit hunters
And their hot-shot, "Top Harpoon"
Taking aim, the mighty warrior
Hurts his missile at the blimp
Down it hisses detumescing
Over pack-ice, dragging limp.
"Leave it," says the Inuit leader;
"NATO can sort out this mess
Let the Top Guns think they got it
After all, they need the press."

FILM

Lost in music, caught in a trap

THE BIG PICTURE



RYAN GILBEY

THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO

(15)
DIRECTOR: WHIT STILLMAN
112 MINS
STARRING CHLOE SEVIGNY
AND KATE BECKINSALE

EVERYTHING SPARKLES in the fictional nightclub at the centre of Whit Stillman's slightly sad comedy, *The Last Days of Disco*. Under the spangled light from the glitterball, the dancers are united in their absent-minded beauty. Pockets of glitter are released from the rafters. Even as the club is being busted by cops, the glitter keeps on falling.

Stillman is a maker of anthropological studies which double as social comedies. His previous features, *Metropolitan* and *Barcelona*, focused on the attempts of the intellectual middle classes to define and control their environment through a manipulation of codes and etiquette that could reasonably be described as Jamesian. *The Last Days of Disco* does not depart from either theme or subject, but the suggestion of pop culture invading the airless milieu which Stillman has made his own does introduce a pleasingly discordant note, however faint.

The film announces itself as unfolding in "the very early Eighties" and follows two young women, the insecure Alice (Chloe Sevigny) and her benignly narcissistic friend Charlotte (Kate Beckinsale), as they gravitate toward clubbing as a means of relief from humdrum publishing jobs. One detail which these actresses have got precisely right is the posture of their characters: shoulders back, faces tilted forward as though to tan under the lights, eyes casually drifting toward the periphery to clock who's watching. The key is not just to enjoy yourself, but to be seen to be enjoying yourself. Surface is everything. The most innocuous misreading can nurture a reputation - a man who is padding away from the club after being refused entry can appear to a passer-by, as though he is leaving early, arrogantly unimpressed by what his social circle considers the epitome of cool.

There seems at first to be some-



When the dance is done: Whit Stillman's analytical distance from the disco scene opens up possibilities denied by films such as *'Boogie Nights'* and *'Saturday Night Fever'*

thing jarring about a film-maker as cerebral as Stillman investigating a movement conjured out of sweat, drugs and sensuality - the trend in modern cinema being for a subject to be addressed in a corresponding style, for gangster movies to be hard and fast, for horror to be hysterical. But this works in the film's favour. Stillman's analytical distance from the disco scene opens up possibilities denied by the heightened identification of *Boogie Nights* or *Saturday Night Fever*. Now you can see that there are as many clubbers trying to convince themselves and each other that they are having a great time as there are clubbers who are actually having a great time.

It gradually becomes apparent that Stillman is interested not in the specific properties of disco, but in using the scene as another example of how human beings construct sit-

uations in which they can determine their own status and progress. The nightclub's ruthlessly elitist door policy exists so that the people who get in can measure how wonderful they are, and the ones who do not can resign themselves to being nobodies, both categories of citizen conspiring equally to maintain this microcosm of the class system.

The characters are obsessed with definitions. When Alice and Charlotte decide to share an apartment, they are dismissed as a yuppie room-mate combo. There are "Harvard men" and there are "people with low socio-economic prospects". A character with a nose for cocaine protests, "I'm not an addict, I'm an habitual user", while an out-of-work executive argues "Unemployed is not who I am". There are your straightforward Yuppies too, though there is much discussion about

whether a social group can actually exist if no one admits to being a part of it.

Des (Chris Eigeman), a nightclub employee, draws on the benefits of a group to which he does not even belong, feigning homosexuality in order to break off relationships and retain the respect, the admiration even, of his ex-girlfriends, all of whom detect a certain cachet in having dated a gay man. This furious snowstorm of labels provides a convenient distraction for those characters who wish to delay finding out who they really are. One of the film's pivotal scenes is a discussion between Des and his attorney friend Josh (Matt Keeler) about the advice "to thine own self be true". "What if thine own self is not so good?" despairs Des. "What if it's pretty bad?" Fear of self-discovery permeates their lives.

On "Into the Groove," one of the most perceptive lyrics in pop music, Madonna sang "Only when I'm dancing can I feel this free", but for the friends in *The Last Days of Disco*, dancing brings only a perceived freedom. When Charlotte goes home with a man she has met at the club, he puts on the joyous "More, More, More", the same record that was ringing out over the dancefloor only moments earlier, and there is a sense of sustained artificiality - music employed not merely as an aphrodisiac, but to create coherence where there is confusion.

Back at the club, when the tangerine-tanned proprietor Bernie (David Thornton) tells his DJ "Good Times, Michael", he is dictating the mood as much as the name of the next record. Like drugs, which make their presence felt as the club nears implosion point, music has an illu-

sory power. Stillman's interest is in watching what happens when the illusion falls apart - when the real world, which has been denied as much by the movie as by its characters, finally presses in.

Even as this happens, Stillman keeps the rigidly-controlled surface of the picture intact. His choice of characters is especially significant; to set a film in the disco era while excluding prominent gay or black characters is a perverse decision designed to underline the dislocation of these cocooned white preppies who think they are where it's at.

There is a coldness to Stillman's approach from which some may recoil, but which is quite refreshing. Better directors than him have attempted to conceal their calculated methods by feigning compassion for people about whom they clearly could not care less. I feel patronised

by Eric Rohmer's *Pauline at the Beach*, for instance, or Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters*, two films which reduce emotional permutations to mathematical theorem under an anaesthetising layer of comedy.

Stillman is more blatant than that, which can bring him perilously close to overstatement. The ongoing discussions about whether a person can change themselves or only their context are driven home with an extended dissection of the subtext of *Lady and the Tramp*, during which you may sense the weight of huge inverted commas bearing down on you. But out of that can come a beautiful, delicate moment which assumes its own life - such as Charlotte gently but confidently singing "Amazing Grace", the theme song for anyone who has survived despair, depression or simply the closing of their favourite nightclub.

Ben Gazzara Felicity Huffman Ricky Jay Steve Martin Rebecca Pidgeon Campbell Scott

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"A sly, delightful, brilliantly constructed con game."

"David Mamet, writer and director of this splendidly tricky film noir, takes Hitchcock as his model and goes one (or two) better."

"Mesmerising."

The Spanish Prisoner

NOW SHOWING

WARRNER VILLAGE ODEON ODEON REX REX PHOENIX LUX FROM FRIDAY AND AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

THE CHARTS



Mega-hyped and dreadfully mocked *Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels* makes number one, with Robert Redford's *The Horse Whisperer* muzzling vigorously from behind (*The Avengers*, meanwhile, quite rightly takes a dive). Stateside, Wesley Snipes cleans up as a black-leather wearing, Marvel Comics-derived vampire-slayer: *Batman*.

US BOX OFFICE

TITLE	SCREENS	WEEK'S TAKINGS (£)
1 <i>Blade</i>	2,322	17,073,856
2 <i>Saving Private Ryan</i>	2,671	10,142,045
3 <i>There's Something About Mary</i>	2,186	7,690,128
4 <i>How Stella Got Her Groove Back</i>	1,399	6,475,227
5 <i>Snake Eyes</i>	2,642	5,046,651
6 <i>Dead Man On Campus</i>	1,797	4,704,688
7 <i>Ever After</i>	1,864	4,575,973
8 <i>Dance With Me</i>	1,467	4,507,663
9 <i>The Parent Trap</i>	2,169	3,885,840
10 <i>The Avengers</i>	2,466	3,664,587

LONDON BOX OFFICE

TITLE	SCREENS	WEEK'S TAKINGS (£)
1 <i>Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels</i>	12	129,887
2 <i>The Horse Whisperer</i>	15	93,543
3 <i>The X-Files</i>	14	76,873
4 <i>Armageddon</i>	12	59,329
5 <i>The Spanish Prisoner</i>	8	48,831
6 <i>Dr Doolittle</i>	5	19,974
7 <i>La Bamba</i>	1	15,918
8 <i>The Avengers</i>	6	15,243
9 <i>Lost In Space</i>	4	14,298
10 <i>The Big Lebowski</i>	4	10,883

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THE FOURTH PAGE DAILY MAIL

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SUNDAY MAIL

Whit Stillman's

The Last Days of DISCO

History is made at night.

FROM TOMORROW
WARRNER VILLAGE ODEON ODEON REX REX PHOENIX LUX FROM FRIDAY AND AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Saving Private Ryan is Steven Spielberg's latest attempt to tackle the Second World War. What lies behind this dark obsession?
By Roger Clarke

"I THINK IT'S interesting to be psycho-analysed via my films," Steven Spielberg once said. If that is the case, his latest film gives plenty of food for thought. Five years on from *Schindler's List*, and more than a decade after *Empire of the Sun*, the blood-soaked *Saving Private Ryan* loosely completes the director's psychologically revealing trilogy of Second World War films.

Yet his interest in a global conflict that was finished before he was even born bears all the hallmarks of an obsession. By contrast, Robert Altman, a fellow director who was a participant in the war, is, judging by his work at least, far less concerned. What is it that draws Spielberg to the Second World War again and again?

It goes far beyond an interest in the Holocaust. Spielberg made his first Second World War movie aged just 12, and since then he has made four feature films explicitly about the war and several others with a Second World War context (the *Indiana Jones* series), and others which have updated Second World War stories (*Always*), featured ghosts from the conflict (*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*), or have characters scarred by their wartime experience (Quinn in *Jaws*, whose hatred of great white sharks is caused by a wartime experience), or have segments about the war (*Amazing Stories: The Movie*).

Self-evidently, the war occupies a special place in Spielberg's consciousness, a fixation which is slightly baffling in a Vietnam-draft generation kid. One explanation may be his idolisation of David Lean. After all, he cited Lean's *Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) as the film that has most influenced him. As a child, Spielberg was particularly fond of acting out to his classmates the scene in which the wounded Alec Guinness falls on a dynamite plunger – a scene partially re-created in *Saving Private Ryan*.

There was also plenty at home to foster the young Spielberg's fascination with the war. Arnold Spielberg, the director's father, had been a radio operator with a B52 bomber squadron which destroyed Japanese railroads in Burma (among whose targets would have been a certain bridge on the River Kwai). "My father filled my head with war stories," Spielberg once said. "I have identified with that period of innocence and tremendous jeopardy all my life. It was the end of an era, the end of innocence, and I have been clinging to it for most of my adult life."

There was nothing innocent about his childhood love of blood and guts. As a child growing up in New Jersey,



War film to end all war films: in 'Saving Private Ryan', Spielberg has again drawn inspiration from his childhood fascination

The man who is directing the war

his interest in mock Second World War battles went far beyond the martial fantasies of the average little boy. He would stage four-day toy soldier battles in the basement. It was a serious business. A childhood friend, talking to Spielberg's biographer, Joseph McBride, recalled that Spielberg "always played with a box of nails and a hammer. When the soldiers were hit... he'd put nails into them, and use ketchup for blood."

The extraordinarily gory battle scenes of *Saving Private Ryan* are not as uncharacteristic of the director of *ET* as might be supposed. Spielberg is a closet gun nut, something which he likes to keep quiet about, according to the actor Charlton Heston in his autobiography, *In the Arena*. Heston describes Spielberg's personal arsenal of weapons as "one of the finest" in California.

From his earliest days, Spielberg also enjoyed alarming his mother by smearing himself with mulberry juice and rushing indoors to brandish his bleeding "wounds" at her. Blood and death appear to have been inextricably linked in his mind. In his first effective short film, *Fighter Squadron*, begun

when he was 12 years old, Spielberg performed a cameo as a German fighter pilot slumped forwards in the cockpit, with black food-dye drooling from his mouth in imitation of blood.

In the same year he also made the 40-minute *Escape to Nowhere* (which has remarkable plot resemblances to *Saving Private Ryan*), a film notable for its liberal use of tomato ketchup. The gory special effects earned Spielberg an amateur film prize and obviously instilled in the nascent director the importance of effective gore. He never looked back. "My special effects were great," Spielberg proudly recalled later.

His early flair for these effects was honed by much of the Second World War paraphernalia which was lying round the Spielberg family home. In one incident, he put his father's flying cap and goggles on to a plastic skull, placed a light bulb inside it and locked his sisters in a cupboard with it. One of the sisters, Anna, went on to write the Tom Hanks vehicle *Big* – about a boy who suddenly finds himself in a man's body – widely supposed to be a comment on her brother.

But Spielberg has not always been

successful in pursuing his war fixation: the 1979 turkey 1941, which John Wayne tried to talk him out of directing, was a misjudged comedy about a Japanese attack on Los Angeles.

Many of the war movies he hoped to make never got made. In 1969, soon after his first modest successes, he tried to develop a Second World War "dogfight film" with Carl Gottlieb (who eventually wrote the shooting script for *Jaws*). Second World War themes continued to gnaw way at him (though in 1973 he turned down directing *MacArthur* because "he was wary of the logistical problems of staging the Second World War"). He was both attracted to and over-awed by the subject. In *Close Encounters*, he changed the main protagonist from an airman to a civilian because "I find it very hard to identify with anyone in uniform".

And yet, with his latest film, *Saving Private Ryan*, he has confounded his own reservations by managing to create convincing military characters who struggle with their masculinity in classic Spielbergian dilemmas (an all-male cast seems to suit him). Though topped and tailed

with scenes of cloying sentimentality, the majority of the film ranks amongst the finest work Spielberg has ever done. Once again he has underscored his primal, childish impulses – in this case, a squeamish love-hate of gore – with a range of extraordinary adult emotional themes.

There are more war clouds on the horizon: Spielberg is currently in pre-production with another Second World War-era movie, this one based on Arthur Golden's best-selling novel, *Memoirs of a Geisha*.

Will Hollywood's wunderkind ever get to the bottom of his obsession? With *Saving Private Ryan*, Spielberg can at least feel that he has answered John Wayne.

"I'm surprised at you," growled the Duke, after reading the script for 1941. "I thought you were an American, and I thought you were going to make a movie to honour the memory of the Second World War."

Twenty years on, Spielberg has done exactly what John Wayne wanted him to do. He has honoured his parents' generation, and perhaps purged some of his own personal demons along the way.

SURVIVING PRIVATE RYAN

JAMES INNES-SMITH RECALLS THE HARROWING EXPERIENCE OF ACTING IN SPIELBERG'S LATEST GLUTTER

"YOUR CALL could come at any time," warned my agent. "He's working very quickly." I had been cast as Lieutenant Stone in a scene with Tom Hanks in a new war movie directed by Steven Spielberg. The anticipation was becoming unbearable.

The call to arms from my agent eventually came at three o'clock on a Friday afternoon. I would be picked up at 6am the following day and driven to Heathrow. From there I'd fly to Dublin and then on to the location in Co Wexford. I dutifully tried to get an early night. Excitement and fear made it impossible to sleep, so I watched my old copy of *ET* instead for inspiration.

On arrival in Dublin, I was picked up by my driver who was making his fifth trip of the day down to the location in Co Wexford. He was full of stories about the great man. "They say he can even control the weather," he informed me. Since Spielberg's arrival, the weather had changed dramatically from pleasantly autumnal to downright miserable, which is exactly what Spielberg had wanted for the filming of the Omaha Beach landings (the D-Day landings which Spielberg re-creates in *Saving Private Ryan*). That terrible day in June 1944 had been particularly grey and drizzly.

At the location I was ushered through a field laid out with row upon row of false limbs and mangled bodies soaked in blood.

These were to be used in the D-Day landing scenes, which were still being filmed on the beaches nearby. Apparently Spielberg was hiring amputees for added realism. I thought back to the whimsical *ET* from the night before and wondered whether this could possibly be the same director.

It was taking much longer than expected to film the D-Day landing scenes, so three days later – and after witnessing some of those spectacular scenes in action – I was sent home to await further instruction.

My eventual call came a month later – two days filming at a location in Hertfordshire. On arrival, I seemed to spend an inordinate amount of time in wardrobe with two Second World War experts who knew everything from the correct tightness of ankle garters (until you lose the feeling in your legs) to the exact angle of a gun holster.

Everything had to be just so. My scene involved warring Hanks and his battalion of men not to venture any further behind enemy lines. Hanks and Tom Sizemore improvised a discussion about death, and whether or not there was a heaven. The others joined in. I watched in awe. Keen on improvisation, Spielberg recorded it all for possible use as dialogue.

Then we read the scene, but because of their amazing, naturalistic style of acting, I did not even know they had started. It is hard to tell where reality ends and the acting begins. As an English actor, when I am told to start acting I mean start "acting". These guys just live it. The script is flexible, too. If you do not like a word or phrase, Spielberg allows you to experiment – a rare luxury. He will, however, argue his case forcefully if he thinks you are wrong, and he draws from his own vast catalogue of work to back himself up. For instance, when Tom Sizemore showed reservations as to why six guys would be travelling through a war zone in only a jeep with no roof for protection, Spielberg told him to think back to the famous "We're gonna need a bigger boat" scene in *Jaws*. In other words, that was the whole point.

We were now ready to shoot the scene. I had problems getting my American salute right, much to the annoyance of "Mr Vietnam".

While we were waiting to roll, Hanks movingly described his thoughts on the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, which he had attended with Spielberg and Tom Cruise the day before. And with Spielberg still coming to terms with the death of his close friend Gianni Versace, the fashion designer, and the fear of being stalked by a fanatical rapist who was still at large, there was a real sense of gloom and unease in the air.

The scene went well and Spielberg added a couple of badly needed lines to my part. Hanks seemed stressed and tired, not surprisingly. He was in the last few days of the shoot and with so much death around, the strain was beginning to show. There was a feeling, though, among everybody involved in the film, that this was going to be no ordinary war movie, but a testament to the reality, horror and bravery of that day in June 1944.

ALSO SHOWING

THE LAND GIRLS (12) DAVID LELAND ■ HE GOT GAME (15) SPIKE LEE
■ HANDS (PG) ARTUR ARSTAKISYAN ■ SPECIES II (18) PETER MEDAK

"A triumphant return to form for Spike Lee, deserves to be seen by all"
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DENZEL WASHINGTON

HE GOT GAME

THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY GAME

FROM TOMORROW

AND AT SELECTED CINEMAS ACROSS LONDON

FEISTY WOMEN clutching one-way tickets to self-discovery are David Leland's speciality. This writer and occasional director creates strong female characters who are not defined by the men around them – his best screenplays include *Wish You Were Here* and *Mona Lisa*. Although his new film, *The Land Girls*, does not rank with those works, it is a creditable attempt at rejuvenating well-trodden turf.

"Land girls" were the volunteers who took on the farm work left by men dispatched to fight in the Second World War. Leland's picture focuses on three of them – the highly sexed Frue (Anna Friel), the prim Ag (Rachel Weiss) and Stella, who is pining for her officer fiancé. As played by Catherine McCormack, an actress with the icy poise of a young Charlotte Rampling, Stella is the most ambiguous and intriguing of the group. Good as Friel and Weiss are, the script is less interested in exploring them and you get the measure of their characters in the first few scenes. Which is not to say that they are not delightful: I liked Frue's seduction technique, which involves jumping into bed with a man and chirping, "Get 'em off, then"; while Weiss waltzes away with the film's finest scene when Ag decides to unburden herself of her cumbersome virginity. But it is McCormack's rootless, slightly haunted performance which makes the film more than just a wartime shaggy dog story.

Leland has also had the good sense to cast the excellent



The Land Girls: strong characters refusing to be defined by the men around them

Steven Mackintosh in the pivotal role of Joe, the bewildered young farmer who becomes the focus of the trio's desires. Mackintosh has virtually monopolised the British acting industry – in the past year alone, he has given amorphous and versatile performances in *House of America*, *Different for Girls* and *Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels*. There is not much for him to do in *The Land Girls* but look vaguely furtive and wounded, but, like everyone involved, he brings a dash of wit to an enterprise which might otherwise have had no reason to exist.

Picture the scene. You are

serving a prison sentence for murder. A deal is put to you. Your spell inside will be significantly curtailed if you get your son – who happens to be America's brightest young star on the basketball court – to sign with the governor's Alma Mater. You have just seven days of freedom in which to find your boy and persuade him. One problem: he has vowed never to forgive you for killing his mother.

As you will have gathered, Spike Lee's new drama *He Got Game* does not take place in this solar system, let alone on this planet. It is a muddled, ungainly collision of social commentary, shameless melodrama and sportswear commercial, gar-

nished with Lee's customary woody camerawork, garish filters and ambitious crane shots, and a painfully inappropriate Aaron Copland score.

Most infuriating are the sparks of brilliance which prove that Lee is not experiencing premature senility, whatever the evidence to the contrary. He coaxes a richly tragic performance from Denzel Washington as the desperate father whose eyes are almost as sad as his Afro, and the view of the sports industry as a bacchanalian pleasure dome of waterbeds and comely young women is splendidly appalling, echoing the crack den sequence from *Jungle Fever*. Even so, this is

a real hotch-potch of a movie, in which it is not unusual to find 30 seconds of inspiration flanked by 20 minutes of whimsical self-indulgence.

HANDS is a deadening semi-documentary that is simple and unsparing in its methods. As images of downtrodden and forgotten citizens – amputees, beggars, the young, the elderly – are played out before us in a grainy collage, a man narrates a message to his unborn child, who may be in the process of being aborted even as he speaks. The thrust of it seems to be that such a fate is preferable to living in modern times. The film is moderately persuasive in this argument, though that should not necessarily be taken as a recommendation.

The science fiction horror movie, *Species II*, rests on a perfect synthesis of sex and violence – the alien breed which travels from Mars to Earth in the bodies of astronauts announces its presence during copulation.

So there you are; everything is going swimmingly when suddenly your partner sprouts tentacles which bore into your flesh, and the next thing you know, you are giving birth to his mutant offspring. Imagine the mess. Like its predecessor, *Species II* offers cornball dialogue, grisly effects and gratuitous nudity, and can be enjoyed with or without copious amounts of drugs and alcohol.

All films on release from tomorrow
RYAN GILBEY

She disappeared after making her debut in 'Trainspotting', but the girl on the poster is back on the big screen, alongside some of her lifelong idols. By James Mottram

Who are Kelly's heroes?

YOU COULD be forgiven for wondering who Kelly Macdonald is. You'll recognise the face - petite features encased by brown bobbed hair. Two years ago she shared half the poster sites in Britain with four other up-and-coming (now more prolific) actors. The film was *Trainspotting*.

Despite wowing critics with her performance as a prostitute in the little-seen *Stella Doss Tricks*, Macdonald has remained off-screen ever since, while the likes of Ewan McGregor and Robert Carlyle have begun to register on the Hollywood consciousness. This is set to change, however. Macdonald is about to become ubiquitous.

Featuring within the space of a month in two high-profile period dramas - *Cousin Bette*, followed by *Elizabeth* - Macdonald must then truly begin as four recently completed pictures are released. Gregg Araki's *Splendor*, Mike Figgis's *The Loss of Sexual Innocence* (alongside fellow rising Brit Jonathan Rhys-Meyers), Hugh Hudson's *My Life So Far* and *Entropy* with Stephen Dorff, should go some way to ensure that she usurps Parker Posey as the queen of independent cinema.

"It's been completely my choice. I've not really been bullied into anything I didn't want to do," says the 22-year-old, resolutely defending her eclectic range of choices. "I've been lucky. Every single thing I've done, I've learnt something from for different reasons. I've not got a pattern to it all, I've just been trying out different things."

I ask her what she learnt on *Cousin Bette*, a kind of *Dangerous Liaisons* without the venom. I receive the innocently earnest reply: "How to ride a horse, and how to get out of a corset myself."

It's hard not to recall in moments like these her pre-*Trainspotting* canna-bis experience: she was sick in a Glasgow canteen, and awoke from a really nice dream about a princess. Can anyone really be this sweet?

She appears tiny in her Dorchester suite. She swings her legs under her chair and giggles continuously through the interview, reaching a point of hysteria as she realises the word "sets" sounds like sex.

"Before *Trainspotting*, I was quite awkward in company and shy," she admits, as if to qualify her nerves. "I would either not say a word, or babble like a lunatic and not make sense. I can now take my time over what I'm

saying. But I don't think *Trainspotting* has made me into anything I wasn't before, or I wasn't going to be anyway."

In *Cousin Bette*, based on the Balzac novel and directed by the American playwright, Des McAnuff, Macdonald plays Hortense, niece to Jessica Lange's calculating Belle, but barely has the chance to stretch herself. She spends much of her time - with a faultless English accent disguising her thick Glaswegian brogue - sobbing into her handkerchief.

"I wanted to prove to me that I could do something else. I wanted to get away from the 16-year-old, contemporary, sexually-active young girls," says Macdonald. "Hortense is a wee bit older. She's not a bad person, but quite spoilt, naive and has very romantic ideas about love and life. She's quite hysterical, really."

It's a performance to be praised technically, if not emotionally. And the same could be of Macdonald's turn in *Elizabeth*, as fine lady-in-waiting to Cate Blanchett's Queen Elizabeth. Ever ready to pop the stardom bubble, Macdonald admits: "There wasn't a lot of work in it. I was just standing there behind the queen."

The glamour of the industry, though, continues to fascinate. "With *Cousin Bette*, I couldn't quite believe I was working with these people. I kept staring. I can't help it. I just get star-struck. When Jessica was on stage in London doing *A Streetcar Named Desire*, I went to see the show, and I went to say 'hello' afterwards. I'd got it into my head that she wouldn't remember me, which was ridiculous as I'd spent two months with her. I was still really excited when she saw me and gave me a hug."

A recently installed resident of Old Street in London, Macdonald still spends much of her time flying back to Glasgow to visit her folks (father's a painter and decorator, mother's a stress counsellor - "which should come in handy, though I don't take any notice of her advice"). It was here that she won her role in *Trainspotting* as the schoolgirl seductress. Despite a lack of formal training, merely a brief spell in an amateur dramatics club, Macdonald went to the auditions (without telling anyone) just to see what they were like.

"If *Trainspotting* hadn't happened I would've eventually plucked up the courage to audition for drama school, spent three years there and God knows how long trying to land a role. It was a very privileged way to get in the industry. It was just a bizarre thing



'I wanted to prove to me that I could do something else'

David Eustace/Conde Nast

to happen. I remember reading about things like that in teen magazines, and thinking it doesn't really happen like that. And then it happened to me."

Or not, as the case may be. Missing out on the Cannes experience that sealed the film's reputation, Macdonald's infamous sex scene with Ewan McGregor was also trimmed in the States because she appeared to be having too much fun, censors felt.

"There was such a buzz about the film," she remembers, "but people didn't recognise me. I could stand next

to the poster and people wouldn't bat an eye."

Uncertain of her next project, Macdonald has taken the opportunity to increase her profile further. Appearing at the recent Edinburgh Festival, she participated in the first live reading of a psychological drama called *Dark Blood* by Fiona Watson.

This was a reaction - like her run at the Old Vic in *Hurly Burly* last year - to the mundanity of film-making. "I think there must be more to it than smoking cigarettes and drinking

coffee," she muses, as if looking for an answer from me.

Less hyped than the *Land Girls* trio of Rachel Weisz, Catherine McCormack and Anna Friel, Macdonald is more of an original, her uncertainties leading me to believe there's no front. "It does feel like I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing now. I don't know how long it's going to last, but it feels right at the moment."

Cousin Bette opens next Friday. *Elizabeth* is released on 2 October.

VIDEO WATCH

MIKE HIGGINS

Wild Man Blues (12), Available to buy from Monday, £14.99. As a post-Mia Farrow exercise, Barbara Kopple's account of a European tour mounted by Woody Allen's jazz band adopts the waris-and-all, "do I not grumble



The first Woody Allen film to be directed since

about the room service like you?" school of biog-documentary. Allen exhibits a range of predictable neuroses - particularly, it transpires, in relation to bathrooms - and there are also moments of bumbling self-consciousness, claret in hand, before his adoring audiences. These bear a fleeting resemblance to his Seventies feature film personae, but this encounter between life and art does the man himself few favours. As grouchy as you hoped he wouldn't be, Allen, for instance, has to be cajoled by his partner Soon Yi merely to thank his hand for their efforts after the opening concert in Madrid. However, as an apologia for Allen's relationship with Soon Yi, Kopple's film is revealing.

When critics cited *Manhattan*, among other works, as a foreshadowing of his complex private life, they didn't know how right they were. Much like Tracy (Mariel Hemingway), Allen's teenage lover in the film, the young Soon Yi gives as good as she gets.

Pretty Village, Pretty Flame (18)

Available to buy, £15.99. Srđan Dragovic's jumbled satire of the Bosnian conflict is something of an antidote to Michael Winterbottom's well-meaning *Welcome to Sarajevo*. In the latter, the shards of decency seemed to have collected in the corduroy turn-ups of an outraged British war reporter. No such moral delusions trouble anyone here. Dragovic's engrossing, complex

portrait of a country's descent into civil war centres on the recollections of a hospitalised Serb soldier, Milan, who before the war had set up a business with his Muslim friend Halil. Much of what we see was filmed as the war raged, and the level of detail Dragovic brings to the casual ethnic enmity of Milan's platoon - enjoying the spoils of their neighbours' looted houses as happily as they had once enjoyed their hospitality - reflects this sense of immediacy. *Pretty Village...* refuses to fall into a sulk, however, inflicting its death and violence on the audience with dark brio. Dragovic is perhaps a little too ambitious - the flashback structure lends the film



enough by way of irony; its central siege episode is an unnecessary attempt to add a bit of tension.

Double Team (18)

Available to rent. There are certain videos that seem to exist solely for pubescent boys to undergo that late-20th-century rite of passage, the under-age attempt to hire a lurid 18-certificate release. See what you think: Jean-Claude Van Damme plays a disgraced spy packed off to a kind of half-way house where he won't get under anyone's feet. Nasty Mickey Rourke (that faint whistling noise is his plummeting career) has designs on Van Damme's family though. Enter Dennis Rodman, moonlighting from his basketball day job, as a gun dealer roped into helping Van Damme. The result is more than enough hammy violence, wild animals and hair tints to get 14-year-olds everywhere practising their basso profundo.

DOUBLE BILL

DAVID LELAND, DIRECTOR OF *LAND GIRLS* (TO BE RELEASED ON SATURDAY), ON HIS IDEAL CINEMATIC PAIRING
FIRES ON THE PLAIN DIR. KON ICHIKAWA (1959) APOCALYPSE NOW DIR. FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA (1979)

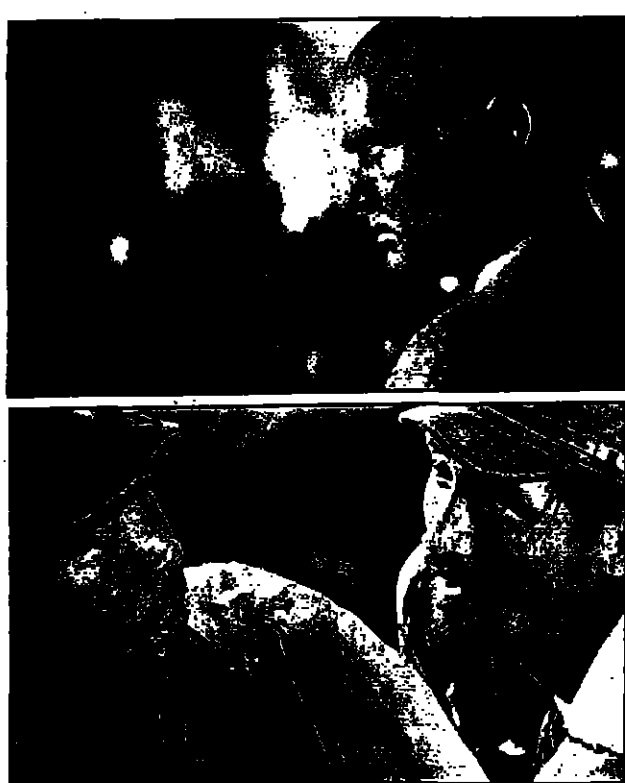
THE FIRST film, *Fires On The Plain* is in black and white and simply tells a story of Japanese soldiers trying to stay alive on their retreat through the Philippines at the end of the Second World War, when they are being driven back by American forces.

It is many years since I have seen it, but it is quite clearly a powerful anti-war film. The Japanese were empire builders, as the British were, and normally show how their soldiers swept through and captured the Philippines and Singapore with the imperialist zeal that they believed was unconquerable. This film shows quite literally the reverse: the soldiers, in retreat, have to hide in the jungle to avoid capture and death by the Americans.

You only ever glimpse the Americans soldiers through the jungle. They appear like spacemen - like creatures from another planet - and so belong to another world, far removed from the one the Japanese soldiers are forced to live in when hiding and trying to survive in the jungle.

The conditions the Japanese soldiers were reduced to are shown in one extraordinary scene, when one soldier - whom we have seen previously as being the embodiment of fanatical zeal - is sitting under a tree, wounded in the stomach and clearly dying.

When he is found by another Japanese soldier, he explains that he is dying and asks the second soldier stay with him. The dying man says: "If you do, you can eat me." The second



'Apocalypse Now' and 'Fires on the Plain' (Ronald Grant)

man walks on, and you are just left with the image of this poor man under a tree.

Every image in the film burns into your mind. What is so incredibly impressive now, as then, is the portrait the film paints of a defeated people; it looks at the nature of defeat among people who believed they could never lose.

So it's a film about defeat and the cost of defeat - to humanity and to soldiers particularly - in any war. It is a very powerful anti-war message.

The link with *Apocalypse Now* is that this second film is also about an army that loses a war, although whether America lost the Vietnam war is still very much a subject of hot dispute in the US. Culturally, it is hard to come to terms with.

I remember sitting in Charles Airport, in South Carolina - a very small airport used mainly by the military en route to Nicaragua - with a Vietnam veteran.

As we sat, a young soldier came through and was greet-

ed by his parents and the man next to me said: "What you are watching there is what happened through hundreds of little airports all through America when soldiers came back from Vietnam, and the look in their eyes was always the same: there was a powerful sense that what they had experienced in Vietnam they would not be able to explain easily to the folks at home."

At the same time, said my companion, all the things that happened were born at home.

He expressed something I profoundly believe: that if you want to track violence in any society, it is always at the centre, not in the peripheries.

That, essentially, is what Coppola was exploring in *Apocalypse Now*, in the journey down the river to what he called the heart of darkness. If you journey deep enough into any heart, you will find its dark side.

When Martin Sheen finds Marion Brando deep in the jungle it is, for me, the most electrifying aspect of the film, as he has just taken a journey to a place where it is impossible to return. Sheen has crossed the river to Hell and it is peopled by American soldiers.

People find this scene incomprehensible because it was not explained. But I did not think you needed an explanation. It is like the man under tree - an image showing more than words could.

And that, to me, is the essence of cinema.

INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER RODGER

"I LAUGHED and CRIED at this movie... deeply touching"

"full of PASSION, EXHILARATION and TRAGEDY"

DAVID LELAND FILM

Land Girls

Catherine McCormack Rachel Weisz Anna Friel and Steven Mackintosh

FROM SEPTEMBER 1

WARNER WEST END VIRGIN HAYMARKET VIRGIN FULHAM WHITELYS ODEON

AND AT SELECTED CINEMAS AROUND THE COUNTRY

Doing the hippy hippy take

Film-maker Artur Aristakysyan won a Russian 'Oscar' for his three-hour pseudo-documentary, 'Hands'. He is seen as Tarkovsky's heir but feels a deeper kinship with the American beatnik. By Roger Clarke

"RUSSIA IS a suicide nation," says Artur Aristakysyan. "I don't understand it; no one understands it."

The 32-year-old hippy from Kishinev, the capital of Moldova, has a steady and slightly unnerving gaze. He wears a flowery poetic shirt, jeans with bell-bottom flares, and beaded *Samburu* bracelets. His long chestnut hair is lank and centre-parted, half Donovan, half Orthodox Russian priest of Andrei Rublev vintage. He is Russia's most fascinating and brilliant new film director for years.

His graduation film is a three-hour metaphysical "documentary". Considering that it is a film about disintegration, its timing seems apt. *Hands* (which won a Russian "Oscar") depicts the human shadows of Russia, the beggars and ghostly mad people of the provincial streets. Palsied figures materialise from a Russia that most people thought had been extinguished by the Soviet jackboot - the old Russia of Gogol's haunted lives and Dostoevsky's idiots and holy fools and gap-toothed sinners.

Aristakysyan is something of a holy fool himself. That is not to denigrate him. He cultivates a certain naivety, a childish seriousness in matters of the imagination. Details are sketchy, but since his teenage years he has been a drifter, a child of the weirder reaches of a rich Russian subculture, an unmellow hippy who ended up in a mental hospital to avoid military service.

Hands is narrated by him. He takes the form of an unseen father addressing his unborn child who is likely to be aborted. The ensuing vision-quest frames uncompromising portraits of real people: a family of three blind beggars in a creepy private world; a dumb youth who looks like a Belsen inmate living in a burrow in the ground; a cheek-sucking crane who keeps a human head in a box; a legless old trooper who whizzes about in a bro-

ken-backed tin bath once used to wash him as a child. Like Werner Herzog's underrated, vaguely traumatised documentaries about the blind and unworried, this film makes the most forgotten people seem full of significance and light.

There is a curious variety of primitive Christianity about his work, though he denies any religious affiliation. "I don't like," he assures me through an interpreter, "the dogmas described in old books. These dogmas were originally expressions of first-hand experiences by the holy fathers. Instead of reading about it, you should live the idea of their lives."

It seems Aristakysyan is a natural heretic; however, his greatest ire is reserved for Hollywood-bedazzled Russian directors and the assorted avatars of Western pop culture, which, like many Russians, he confuses with the genie of consumerism. He believes that what he calls "pop culture" is as alluring as a siren and as corrosive as Coca-Cola. Like most genuine hippies, he is profoundly ascetic. "Hippies are like Jesus Christ," he says. "It's very easy to corrupt them and tempt them." I ask him what tempts him. "Olives without stones," he whispers. "Huge shops full of music."

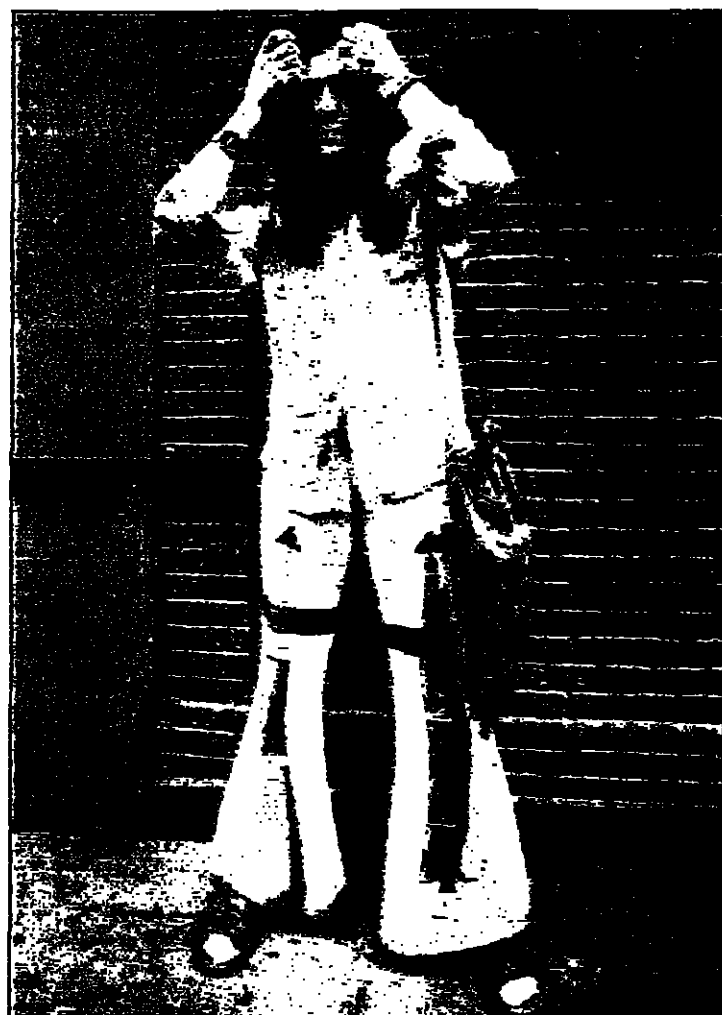
By all accounts, his basic physical survival has been pretty precarious: he lives in a hippy commune he founded in Moscow, and has virtually no money and no interest in getting it. His creation of *Hands* is already the stuff of legend: he sold his books and clothes to find the money to make it, intermittently over eight years. When all else failed, the beggars of Kishinev gave him money to help make the film in which they appear. You certainly will not find him on the heliport at Nice, his hair trailing as the rotor blades whirl or complaining about the BFI over a *Soho* café *mochiata*.

"I'm just concerned with survival," he explains, and I then ask



On the edge: director Artur Aristakysyan, main pic (Neville Elders). From top to bottom, 'Stalker' (Kobal Collection), 'Come and See' and 'The Colour of Pomegranates'

whether he means bodily survival or artistic survival. Of course, with Aristakysyan, they are indivisible. "There's nothing more important than art for me," he says with an earnest blankness not seen this side of Fifties Rive Gauche Paris. "For me to survive, for art to survive



for me, it's the same thing." Aristakysyan wants to be an artist. And he is absolutely damning about other film-makers. "There are so many bad films being made in Russia," he complains, "they're made by very bad machines and they mean nothing."

He will not be drawn into naming names, but then again he also will not mention his great influences, either in film or in literature. He likes to travel light, and names are just so much baggage. Only later do I discover that his masters are Pasolini, a US documentary maker called Li-

onel Rogozin, "Mexican-period Buñuel" and, of course, cerebral genius Robert Bresson.

The skeins of hippy thought woven into his outlook make him tend towards a more subcultural view of art, a kind of muscular anarcho-folk. Appropriate, perhaps, to a country that has been described as fostering anarcho-capitalism. His upbringing was in a backwater; it was bereft of access to certain writers and artists. Instead he feels his way instinctively. When he intriguingly describes Tarkovsky - whose heir he is reckoned to be - as "an elite Russian beatnik who succeeded in the Soviet Union in a way no one could now," I quiz him about Allen Ginsberg. "I have not read the American beatniks," he says. "But I feel them, and love them. Their books did not change the world - but they helped them find their brothers."

He is keen on finding his brothers around the world; while in England, he was making enquiries as to where he could go to meet other hippies. "They should have made hippy reservations in America," he says whimsically, "like the ones they had for the Native Americans. America would then have had a chance for self-healing." He adds, convinced of their magical gifts, "Hippies exist in a fairy tale."

His own fairy tale could end soon if he does not find \$100,000 to finish his first feature film, two-thirds complete. Russia teeters on the brink of chaos and film-making has a low priority. He dreads having to go to "gangs and criminals" for the cash. Once there was something called "The Thaw" in Russian film-making. Now we have "The Melt". "I'm on my own," he says without a trace of self-pity. "All I have is cinema."

'Hands' screens at the Rencoir from Friday 4 September, at 5.45pm and 8.25pm. The director will attend the 8.25pm performance

FILMS FROM A RUSSIAN APOCALYPSE

SIX METAPHYSICAL CLASSICS
TO BRING YOU DOWN, MAN

Sergei Paradjanov's *The Colour of Pomegranates* (1968). Sent to the gulags for all kinds of transgressions, Paradjanov's lavishly baroque aestheticism was not what the Soviet authorities wanted to see. Aristakysyan turned up on Paradjanov's doorstep when he was only 20.

Elem Klimov's *Come and See* (1985). Disliked by liberal Russians for its re-writing of the war on the Eastern Front, it is nevertheless one of the most damaging, terrifying anti-war films ever made. He has not made a film since.

Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979). Tarkovsky is the granddaddy of Russian metaphysics and this, according to some, is his magnum opus, a futurist fantasy and political allegory set in some decayed and mysteriously powerful interzone.

Grigory Kozintsev's *King Lear* (1971). A Shakespeare adaptation, staged among large boulders with half-naked actors on a freezing steppe. Even Lear's castle is decomposing into the raw materials of nature. Do we scent a metaphor here?

Alexander Sokurov's *Days of Eclipse* (1988). Another non-commercial auteur in a similar maverick mould to Aristakysyan. This is set in a desert in Soviet Central Asia where a doctor experiences exile.

Vladimir Tumaev's *Moon Dogs* (1995). Unreleased in the West, this tale of a 12-year-old girl dying of AIDS in a Russian orphanage is said to have a grin, forbidding stamp on it. No holds barred.

Still playing children's games

THE CHILDLESS middle-aged couple in Edward Albee's classic play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, have invented a fantasy son who is the object of some of their most vicious marital games, and who needs to be killed off if the drama is to reach any sort of catharsis.

Some three-and-a-half decades later, there's a strange, distorted echo of this at the close of Albee's latest work, *The Play About the Baby*, which is unveiled now in Howard Davies' beautifully acted, darkly larky production at the Almeida, in Islington, north London.

Here, though, it's a young inexperienced couple who are eventually browbeaten into denying the existence of the sincerely-believed-in flesh-and-blood baby who has been stolen from them. It's only when they can concede that this offspring is a phantom that their tormentors cease to plague them.

The Play About the Baby is a puzzling piece, very different in manner from *Who's Afraid...* On an almost bare set, it brings

THEATRE

THE PLAY ABOUT THE
BABY
ALMEIDA
LONDON

into conflict two couples. There's the twentysomething boy and girl, whose sexy glow of animal good health is effortlessly projected by Rupert Penry-Jones and Zoé Waltes. Chasing each other naked across the stage, they are in vibrant contrast to the fifty-something man and woman whose quizzical, archly self-dramatising air is conveyed by Alan Howard and Frances de la Tour with a delicious drollery.

This latter pair chat familiarly with the audience about such topics as the effect of theatrical intermissions on health. The woman has sudden, pottily Pentecost-like fits of being able to communicate in sign language. All smirking smugness, the man gets to deliver his favourite speech twice when he directs a lengthy



A darkly larky production

Nigel Norington

recapitulation of the climax at the end of Act One. But their ludic, teasing methods prove to be part of a darker purpose when it becomes clear that they have plotted to steal the baby and subject the younger couple to a wrenching ordeal.

"What gives you the right to have a child?" is a question that would naturally be of particular interest to Albee, who was adopted. But the test conducted here is decidedly peculiar. It is

not as though these are a couple of cruelly irresponsible parents, or that the senior pair are overburdened with caring credentials. The man, for example, scoffs at the young couple's love for their child. He seems to be provoked by the idea of a baby as an expression of conformity or personal need. As they bombard their bewildered juniors with false insinuations of homosexual hanky-panky and insert themselves lewdly and polymor-

phously into their memories, the man and woman conjure up a bizarre, reckless world of alternative opportunity. The strategy is to reduce the stereotypical young couple to the point where they take nothing for granted any more, not even the existence of their child. Whether this produces a redemptive purgation, and hence a better basis for future parenthood, is left open at the tearful, sober close.

The play is an artful mix of slittishness and seriousness, elements beautifully balanced in Davies' production. But it is also generalised, and sealed off in its own theoretical dramatic universe, where a couple can go through the harrowing business of losing a baby without once indicating, in their conversations, what sex it is, let alone its name.

At one point, the girl protests that a couple who had children could not have devised this ordeal. There are times when you feel that a man who had had children could not have written this play.

PAUL TAYLOR

Easy on the Earbox

NICOLAS SLONIMSKY, writer and lexicographer, was born in Russia in 1894 and died three years ago in California, much loved by musicians around the globe. Slonimsky was one of a kind. His maverick curiosity led him to perform Ives and Varèse when no other conductor was looking at their works. He compiled *Baker's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and *A Lexicon of Musical Invective* - a collection of gloriously wrong reviews by fat-headed critics. And in 1947 he assembled a compendious *Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns* which has fascinated jazz musicians and classical composers ever since.

John Adams's *Slonimsky's Earbox*, based on the *Thesaurus* and given its London premiere by Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Tuesday's Prom, is an orchestral toccata whose warm harmonies and insistent rhythms mirror its inspirer's bubbling good humour. *Slonimsky's Earbox* is written for a

PROMS

LOS ANGELES
PHILHARMONIC
ROYAL ALBERT HALL

large orchestra - indeed, like several of Adams's works, it might not escape the charge of occasional over-scoring - and shows the kind of symphonic sweep that his music increasingly displays.

Some younger composers, having played around with music as sound, are rediscovering the structural power of harmony; Adams's sense of musical purpose woke up early, and in *Slonimsky's Earbox* he demonstrates how fruitfully it can be allied to a feeling of sheer fun.

In Mahler's *Lieder eines fùhrenden Gesellen*, Salonen was joined by the American soprano Lorraine Hunt, whose physical involvement with Mahler's folk texts suggested an instinct for the stage - she lived the words, her expressions and gestures pointing up

the meaning of the poet's disillusionment with nature.

It is rare these days to hear any of Sibelius's numerous tone-poems in the concert hall; the chance to listen to all four of his *Lemminkäinen Legends* of 1895 - nearly 50 minutes of music - comes almost never. Salonen undermined the basic unity of Sibelius's conception, reinforced by touches of the scoring - a fondness for solo cello, for example. Salonen's *fast tempi* in the closing *Return of Lemminkäinen* could be forgiven after the three predominantly slow movements which preceded it, and his attention to detail produced extraordinary clarity in the orchestral playing. But one missed the larger phrase: if any composer wrote in wide, sweeping lines, it was Sibelius, and some of his natural grandeur was sacrificed. Yet this was a rare musical treat, an adventurous piece of programming which more conductors ought to be encouraged to attempt.

MARTIN ANDERSON

FILM RUSHES

IF YOU'RE feeling generous, you may criticise *The Siege*, the forthcoming 20th Century Fox thriller for bad timing. But the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) claims that significant parts of the film, starring Bruce Willis, Denzel Washington and Annette Ben-

ing, are "gratuitously offensive", according to reports in the *Los Angeles Times*.

In the light of the widespread Western belief that Muslim fundamentalists were responsible for the recent Kenyan and Tanzanian bombings, the film, directed by Ed

Zwick, was bound to run into trouble: it deals with the harsh treatment of Arab-Americans following a Muslim bombing campaign in New York. *Variety* has surmised that the bombing of a Cape Town Planet Hollywood restaurant, in which Siege star Bruce Willis is an in-

vestor, may have been specifically in response to the film's purported anti-Islamic slant.

CAIR claims that it has received numerous complaints about the film's *American* trailer, which cuts a scene of Muslims at prayer with bombing footage.

For its part, CAIR has criticised Fox for insensitivity given the recent bombings, and has requested that the studio "either re-evaluate and reshoot the main plot line or insert disclaimers and eliminate all religious symbolism." According to the *Los Angeles Times*, CAIR had already expressed concern to Fox about the stereotypical Western prejudices it believed the film depicted; in particular, "lecherous, threatening, misogynistic, fanatic, exotic, foreign infiltrators who lust after *Baywatch* and *American* liberties."

Zwick and producer Linda Obst have insisted that the film's intention is in fact to undermine the very stereotypes that CAIR fear go unquestioned in *The Siege*. "The point of this movie," Zwick apparently told the *L.A. Times*, "is to take a hard look at this country, our country, its prejudices, its stereotyping, and oppression."

Fox, which defended the film as "thought-provoking", has announced no plans to change it, or postpone its release date.

alongside Pierce Brosnan and Rene Russo in MGM's forthcoming remake of *The Thomas Crown Affair*, the studio is organising an auction. Bidding is to open at \$10,000 and the wannabe with the deepest pockets will report to John McTiernan in New York City when filming starts in a couple of months. The studio has pledged anything in excess of the winning bid's first \$10,000 to the cure and prevention of ovarian cancer. In fact, so authentic a film experience has MGM in mind for the lucky extra that they've even laid on the usual condition that there's "no guarantee" that your blood, sweat and tears will end up in the final cut.

IT SEEMS that Gus Van Sant, who directed Robin Williams in *Good Will Hunting*, is to join forces with his Oscar-winning lead once again. According to *Variety*, the pair have got a big screen adaptation of the life of the cartoonist John Callahan in their sights. The Columbia Pictures project, *Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot*, will depict the battles with alcoholism and suicidal tendencies that Callahan faced after a car accident left him a quadriplegic.

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EDUCATION

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So, you want a career in journalism?

A BA in Egyptology may be just as effective at getting you a job as a media studies course. By Lucy Hodges

Aspiring students take note: new statistics show it may not be smart for you to opt for supposedly vocational degrees in media or design studies. These subjects have higher unemployment rates than traditional academic subjects such as languages or classics, according to data published last month by the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Yet young people clamour to get on to media and design courses. For example, the BA Hons in multimedia journalism at Bournemouth University has 1,162 applicants for 62 places. Why are students flocking to such courses in the teeth of the evidence about jobs? The answer, it seems, is that the young are in search of glamour. They think journalism will be cool – however much practising journalists tell them to the contrary – and, above all, interesting. And they want to do something that will give them skills which might help in the job market.

Experts think that the information about the poor job prospects of some of the fashionable courses has not yet filtered through. Professor Alan Smithers, whose Centre for Education and Employment Research is moving to Liverpool University, believes that young people may not be receiving entirely accurate information. "It may be that the students are receiving very attractive brochures, leaving them with the impression that a degree in equine studies will enable you to spend your life working with horses or a degree in media studies will give you a job on *The Independent* or the *Today* programme," says Smithers.

Once students do cotton on, they may well desert the fashionable courses in droves, particularly now that they are paying the £1,000 a year tuition fee.

If the latest figures from HESA are to be believed, they show unemployment at 11 per cent to be highest among art and design graduates. Then come media studies students with a 10 per cent unemployment rate. Students of humanities subjects do better – with an unemployment rate of just over 7 per cent, similar to the unemployment rate of that quintessentially vocational subject, business studies.

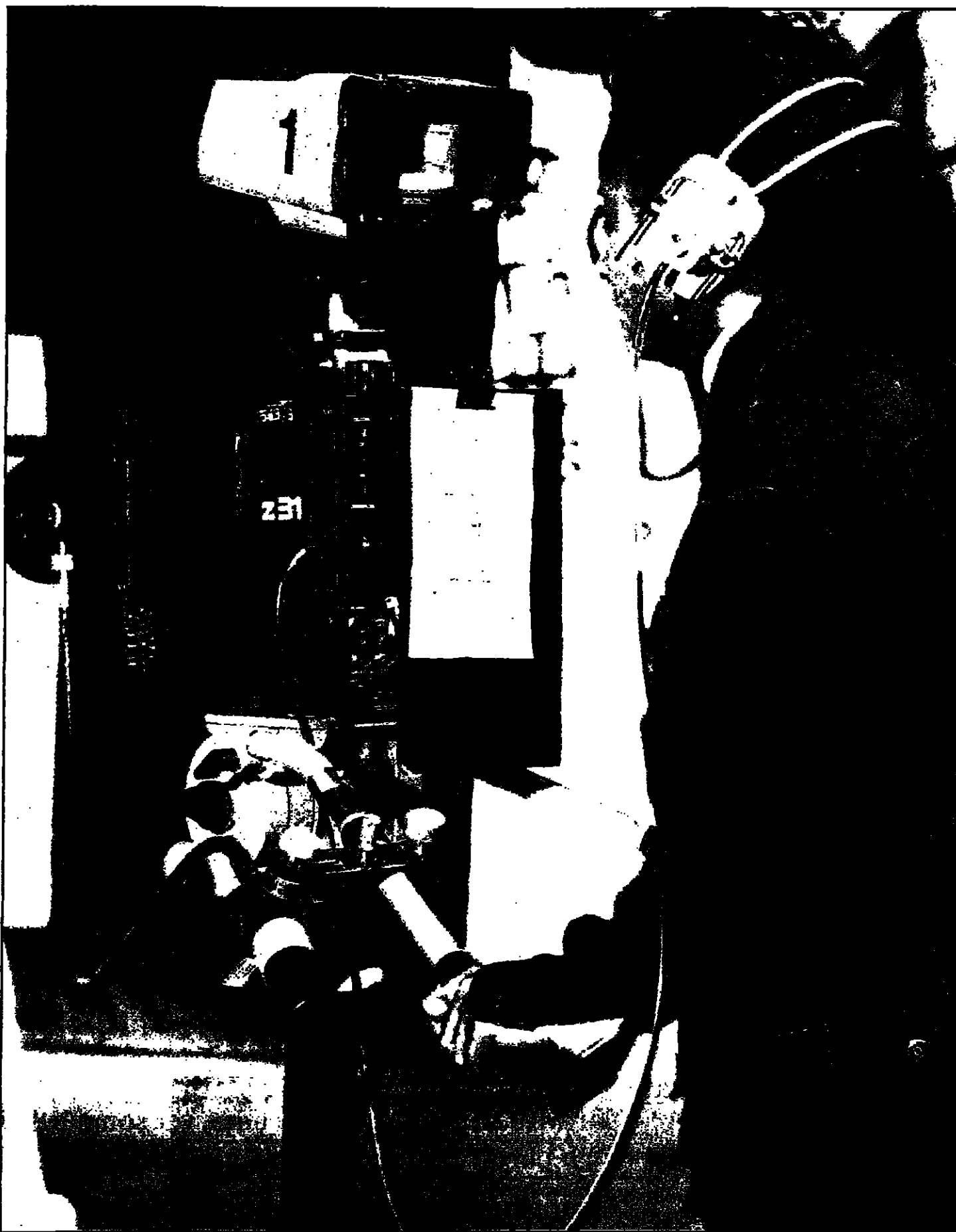
But there are problems with the new statistics. Tony Higgins, chief executive of UCAS, says the figures on the jobs graduates go into after leaving university are "notoriously unreliable". He explains: "The figures are entirely dependent on people returning questionnaires to careers officers or whoever collects the data. Until you can get a method of tracking students by using some form of common identification number and a record of where people are working, for example, like the National Insurance number, you will never get a national picture."

Of course, not all media degrees are a passport to the dole queue. Degrees in media studies differ from one another. Some, such as Bournemouth's, are intensely practical, are approved by the industry's own training bodies and have impressive employment records – 83 per cent of graduates from Bournemouth's BA Hons in multimedia journalism find jobs within six months. Other courses are much more theoretical, concerned with analysing television programmes

such as *Neighbours* and phenomena such as the reaction to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. Students should closely examine syllabuses and job records of the universities they are interested in attending.

The way in which the new HESA data has been interpreted is also a problem. All the attention has focused on the students who declare themselves to be unemployed six months after graduating. However, if one looks – as Geoffrey Copland, vice-chancellor of the University of Westminster, has done – at the graduates in jobs, a different picture emerges. As many as 74 per cent of media graduates are employed six months after leaving university, compared with a mere 54 per cent in humanities subjects. Many more humanities than media graduates opt to do further study and training. This points to media degrees being highly vocational, says Copland.

All of which suggests that the figures should be treated with caution. Some vocational degrees – particularly those concerned with computers – are undoubtedly a good bet for jobs. But you do not have to have done an IT-related degree to go into computing, just as you do not have to graduate in accountancy or law to get into those areas. And, if you are doing a defined vocational course, careers advisers say you should use your leisure and vacation time to develop as broad a range of skills as possible and to make yourself as interesting a candidate as you can to all employers. "You're much better off doing what you want to do," says Higgins. "You should go to university to enjoy yourself, to enjoy the subject, and if that happens to be media studies, great."



Multimedia journalism at Bournemouth University is inundated with applications

WORD OF MOUTH

JOHN IZBICKI

Children under fire

WHENEVER MATURE, well-educated adults start blowing each other up in so-called civilised parts of the world, who suffers most? The very old and the very young. Children have always been the innocent victims of wars, be they the senseless strife in Northern Ireland or the sickening "ethnic cleansing" of Eastern Europe. Now there's a new unit which will attempt to protect civilian children from armed conflict and carry on the good work of Graça Machel – yes, the new Mrs Nelson Mandela. She was a United Nations expert in this field before her marriage to the South African president, and two years ago compiled the UN report, *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*. The unit has been set up jointly by the Children's Legal Centre, a British charity, and the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex and with



Graça Machel

Government funding. The university awarded Madame Machel an honorary doctorate for her work in the field of children's human rights, when she and President Mandela visited the campus a year ago and

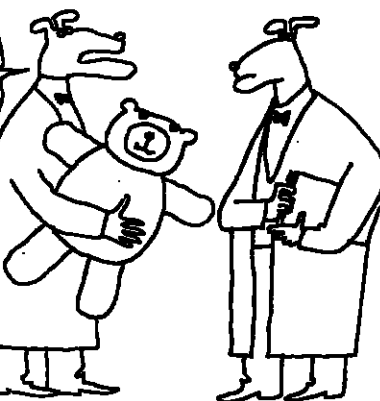
she has agreed to be the unit's patron. The unit will monitor all violations of legal standards and norms in relation to children, provide good practice guidelines and disseminate information gathered to all interested parties. It will be led jointly by Carolyn Hamilton, director of the Children's Legal Centre, and Françoise Hampson, Professor of Law at Essex who has just been appointed as an expert on the UN sub-commission on the prevention of discrimination and the protection of minorities. I wish it luck, though I fear children will continue to suffer the sins of their fathers.

Churchill lives

WHEN SIR Winston Churchill died 33 years ago, many thousands of people gave generously to fund a memorial, which was not just another statue or bust, but more of a living tribute to the great man. The money

collected helped set up a series of travelling fellowships for British citizens who have a burning desire to conduct a dream project abroad. Neither age nor sex is a bar. Nor is physical disability. And for once, academic study and attending courses are out. All that's required is the outline of a good project. There are 100 fellowships to be won. Last year's awards averaged £5,750 a head and covered return air fares as well as day-to-day living and

travel expenses. Closing date for applications, containing a simple outline of the project (detailed plans must be submitted once you have been shortlisted) is 23 October. Successful fellows will be announced in February 1999. For application forms and other info: The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, 15 Queen's Gate Terrace, London SW7 5PR (Tel: 0171-584 9315; Fax: 0171-581 0410; E-mail: office@wcmtrust.org.uk). And good luck.



Raw burger sounds CONGREVE DEFINITELY had a point when he said that "music has charms to soothe a savage breast", so when a pupil not known for keeping cool at school told drama teacher Howard Raw that his behaviour would improve if he could listen to some music, Raw tried an experiment. Instead of switching on Radio One, he decided to let some of the lads, all aged 15, run their own radio station during the lunch breaks. Thus was Radio CPHS – Colne Primet High School in Lancashire – born.

"We had some old speakers, decks and microphones – all a bit dated, but it was a start," Raw told *The Teacher*, journal of the National Union of Teachers. Now every lunchtime reverberates to the sound of music, but when a female pupil, Jessica Morgan, 15, took her turn at running the prog, she introduced *The Love Nest*, "a sort of lonely hearts thing". Such has been the station's success that the PTA has bought some better equipment. And students are so busy enjoying music with their burgers, there's no time for playground skirmishes.

Raw burger sounds

ONE HORRIFYING episode has left an 800-year-old bitter taste in the mouths of many York academics and clerics. I refer to the vile and gory massacre of the city's large Jewish community in 1190. Ever since, there has never been any significant Jewish community in this beautiful city.

York makes amends

In an attempt to help build a more substantial Jewish population, the University of York is to open a new campus centre specifically for Jewish students this month. With the help of the Hillel Foundation, the university has refurbished a house that will provide accommodation for four students and reception areas for groups of 30, plus a kosher kitchen.

Young and younger

In the recent special supplement I produced for *The Independent* on higher education in Scotland, I described Heriot-Watt as the youngest of Scottish universities. Of course it isn't. Its foundation dates back to 1821 when the Edinburgh School of Arts was opened, but it did not become a university until 1966.

A-Z OF UNIVERSITIES THAMES VALLEY

Age: Six as a university. History: Previously the Polytechnic of West London. Formed in 1991 from a merger of Ealing College, Thames Valley College Slough, London College of Music and Queen Charlotte's College of Healthcare study. The following year it became a university with all the other polys. Address: Ealing, west London (six locations), and Slough, Berkshire (two locations). Oh yes, and don't forget Reading, and Malaysia. Ambience: Most students are in Ealing, 10 miles from central London. 20 per cent of students at Slough. Vital statistics: Big, ethnically

diverse institution with large number of mature students, many on sub-degree courses run part-time, day-release and in the evenings. 39,000 students in all, 9,000 of them taking TVU degrees abroad. Recruits heavily through Clearing. Got into trouble last year when it decided to pass students who should have failed. Order was rescinded, leaving TVU with some bad publicity, but no harm done. Student applications went up. Added Value: Helps students find jobs via its Work Bureau which gets jobs in the university so students can work in-house in lieu of tuition fees. Provides service for employers looking for graduates.

Easy to get into? Yes. Takes access students, progressing from short course to access course to diploma to degree. Glittering alumni: Pete Townsend, Freddie Mercury, Ron Wood of The Rolling Stones and members of Radiohead, Reef and The Seahorses. Also John Bird, editor-in-chief of *The Big Issue*; Jung Chang, author of *Wild Swans*; Anthony Booth, chief executive of Ericsson and Tony Frame, chairman of Bonington Hotels. Transport: Free shuttle bus connects Ealing and Slough campuses. Tubes at Ealing take you in to central London. Trains to Paddington from Slough.

Who's the boss? Mike Fitzgerald, who used to sport long hair and an earring. Teaching: Awarded 22 out of 24 in sociology and linguistics, 18 in modern languages and 15 in American studies. Research: 82nd out of 101 in the research assessment exercise. Achieved top grade 5 in linguistics. Financial health: In the black. Nightlife: Three bars at each site and an annual ball. Live bands, club nights and parties throughout the week. Cheap to live in: No campus accommodation. Expect to pay up to £60 a week for a bed-sit in Ealing; maybe a bit less in Slough. Buzz-question: Are you going to the dogs tonight? (The local bar, the Dog's Bollocks). Next week: University College London

LUCY HODGES

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David Mooney, whose teacher assessed 'A' grade in A-Level biology course work was reduced to a 'D' by examiners

Neville Elder

Examiners deal too harshly with teacher assessments

Modular courses are popular with students and teachers, yet some believe that external exam boards are acting tough purely in response to political criticism. By Tony Mooney

Exam boards are extremely sensitive about the consistency of their standards. They deny the constant criticism that exams are becoming easier and insist that their procedures ensure comparability from year to year. After this year's A-levels, however, some teachers are wondering whether the steady stream of political criticism may have had an effect, and whether marking standards are being covertly tightened.

Many teachers seeing their students' results for the A-level modular biology exam are dismayed at the way the marks they allocated for the teacher-assessed part of the course have been slashed by the external moderators. In some cases the teacher-assessed marks have been halved.

Modular examinations are becoming increasingly popular with students because they allow them to be examined as the course progresses. The students receive regular feedback about performance and how to improve. The teacher-assessed part of science courses is usually confined to laboratory work and field studies, and provides 20 per cent of the total mark.

My son recently completed two such modular courses in biology

and chemistry at the excellent Camden School for Girls in North London, and I have watched his progress with more than the usual parental interest.

As an ex-headteacher and head of science, I was particularly interested in the teachers' grades for his coursework. Apart from one piece of work which I thought had received slightly severe treatment, the marks

teachers, including the deputy head-teacher. So accurate has been their marking in the past that no one can remember any adjustments to their marks by external moderators.

The moderator's report over the past two years has praised the standard of the assessing. The 1997 report in fact reads: "The standards agreed by the moderator were in close agreement and no adjust-

fact that other biology departments have received similar treatment. Two other popular London schools I contacted had their modular biology coursework marks savaged in the same way, but by a different examining board.

So what has changed? Inquiries to Edexcel, the London Examining Board which conducts the Camden exams, suggests very little. Jeremy

plain some of the very large discrepancies involved.

In the schools I have surveyed it is clear that something has gone wrong. Either changes have been made of which teachers are not aware, and for which they have not received training, or there has been a covert tightening of standards. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is the regulating body that would have agreed any changes. It should set up an immediate inquiry, which should start by checking its own code of practice, and ensure that all moderators are "fully conversant with the overall standard of work associated with particular grades in previous years".

It should also check its own advice that "statistical information must be used to inform the awarding body's final judgements on marks awarded. Where applicable, the data should include overall results and individual centres' results for previous years and for different examination components".

As for the teachers and parents concerned, they should appeal vociferously to the exam boards and to the Independent Appeals Authority. Only then will the examiners recognise the depth of feeling that has been generated.

Inquiries showed that one girl, who had received 'A' grades in all her other externally-examined modules, had lost her overall 'A' grade because of her coursework had been moderated down to 'C'

were almost exactly what I would have given. So, it came as a great surprise to me and his teachers to find that his teacher-assessed biology mark had been reduced from an A to a D. Further inquiries showed that all the higher-grade students had received similar treatment and that one girl, who had received A grades in all the other externally-examined modules, had lost her overall A grade because of her moderated C in her coursework.

The school's biology team has been together for seven years and possesses some highly experienced

ments were made." Indeed, the quality of the science teaching at the school can be guessed at from the moderator's more detailed comments. Graphs and tables in students' work were praised for clarity and the moderator was moved to write: "Thank you for your detailed marking which proved very helpful."

Although the Camden teachers have approached their marking with their usual professional diligence, they must be fearing the worst as they await this year's report from the moderator, which is due this week. But they can take solace from the

Taffer, manager of policy, says: "Our moderation systems are scrupulously applied according to common procedures agreed between the examining boards and the regulator. Through this process, common high standards can be applied throughout the country."

What this statement fails to answer is whether moderating procedures have been tightened this year. Taffer suggests that there may have been change when he explains that this year's tolerance levels between moderator and teacher marks have been tightened. But that cannot ex-

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

BETHAN MARSHALL

SOMETHING VERY odd is happening to the idea of a national curriculum. It is being fragmented. The Conservatives' big idea is being chipped away at by a Labour government equally strident on the need to raise standards. Literacy and numeracy hours mean that all schools can pick and choose what they follow as long as they push the basics. Schools in action zones are encouraged to do their own thing. It is even being mooted that successful schools may not have to adhere to the same curriculum structures as their less successful counterparts.

What makes these moves by the Labour government interesting is the variety of ways in which they can be read. At one level it seems yet further evidence of the way in which Labour has adopted the free market, the so-called Third Way, in a manner unthinkable to the Tories. Although the Conservatives preached an enterprise culture within schools, creating an internal market of competing institutions, they always tightly controlled what went on from the centre. For the first time, they laid down exactly what had to be studied in our schools.

There is a sense in which Labour is taking such ideas to their logical conclusion. Introduce the private sector and the curriculum will be safe in its hands.

Action zones, whereby business takes over the running of a consortium of struggling schools, have found much support from committed free marketeers such as James Tooley, formerly the director of the Institute of Economic Affairs, the right-wing think-tank. Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, is a keen supporter of the idea that successful heads should be left to their own devices. This idea found favour with Stephen Byers, who was schools minister until the summer Cabinet reshuffle.

But there is another way of interpreting the evidence. The Conservatives introduced a national curriculum because they did not trust teachers. There is plenty of evidence that the Labour government is not wholly sure of them either.

Why else would it prescribe in such minute detail what primary schoolteachers have to teach through the numeracy and literacy hours, in which the style and content of the teaching is directed down to the last minute?

Yet relaxation of the curriculum could be seen as the first tentative step towards teachers regaining some autonomy over what they teach. It allows the state sector some of the independence that private schools have enjoyed over the last 20 years. And this must be a good thing. But while the private sector has managed to avoid the constraints of national curriculum testing, there is no suggestion that opting out of the curriculum will mean opting out of tests for state schools.

And it is this tension between Labour's desire to dictate and the desire to liberate which may well produce the most damaging consequences to the kind of education children receive in the future. Those in the educational establishment who first mooted the idea of a national curricu-

lum did so less from the sense that teachers needed controlling and more from the conviction that all children were entitled to a fair deal, to a broad and balanced curriculum.

That it was the Tories who pushed this idea, and that it should be Labour which is undoing it, is one of the great ironies of the current muddle of educational policy.

The real dilemma is that Labour does not have a vision



Chris Woodhead and Stephen Byers: successful heads know best approach

of education beyond mere economic necessity and no view of the intrinsic value of learning beyond an acquisition of basic skills.

Dismantling a national curriculum, while still insisting on the narrow tests that accompany it for 7, 11 and 14-year-olds, may simply mean that struggling schools will spend more time teaching to test to improve their position in the league tables.

Their confident counterparts have time to experiment with more adventurous approaches to education, while the schools which most need to innovate will feel pressure to be conservative. The very children who would benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum may well be the ones who are denied it.

Bethan Marshall is a lecturer in education at King's College London

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Hellfire Teacher: When the priest of a small Colombian town spat fire and brimstone from the pulpit one Sunday, he said he was just doing his job of saving parishioners' souls from a high-school teacher with "satanic beliefs". But the teacher, Ruben Giraldo, a self-proclaimed "free-thinker" who explores alternative religions, said the Rev Juan Carlos Jaramillo's impassioned readings from Deuteronomy led to death threats against him. Townsfolk began to avoid him and students started calling him "Satan's professor". Fed up, Giraldo filed a civil rights lawsuit last year against Jaramillo, and the Constitutional Court recently ruled in his favour. An unrepentant

Jaramillo said he had to warn parishioners because Giraldo's son gave a classmate a spell to keep away harm. "You have to understand that El Santuario is a very superstitious place," said Jaramillo, who has since moved away. "People see witches and demons in everything. You have to fight to promote the faith."

Going to Pot: When it comes to drug use, teachers and students will never agree, it seems. According to a new survey by the National Center of Addiction and Substance Abuse in the US, 71 per cent of high school students think more than half of their fellow students have tried marijuana, compared to only 26 per cent of teachers.



Only 13 per cent of high school principals think the drug problem is getting worse, compared to 51 per cent of students and 41 per cent of teachers. Still, 49 per cent of teachers and princi-

pals believe a teenager can be a weekend weed-smoker and still get good grades.

Forbidden Fruit: Is a half-eaten apple a deadly weapon? An appeals court got to the core of that question with the case of Gavin T, a student whose tossed apple knocked a teacher unconscious. The 1st District Court of Appeal said the assault by fruit wasn't a criminal act. Gavin was eating lunch outside when he decided to throw a half-eaten apple at a wall to see it splatter. By accident, the apple flew through a gap in a door and hit a teacher. The teacher was knocked unconscious. Gavin was charged with felony assault. Although a lower court found that he did

not intend to hit the teacher, the teenager was found guilty anyway. The appeals court overruled his punishment.

Animal Hospital: Student nurses have been accused of putting lives at risk after a spate of fire hoaxes at a Greater Manchester hospital. Just one week after a blaze destroyed four operating theatres at Wythenshawe Hospital, nurses at Trafford General have been blamed for a series of hoaxes; letting off alarms which are linked directly to fire stations. Fire chiefs intend to get tough on offenders. Only last month, fire-fighter John Ashton suffered serious injuries when his fire engine crashed while answering a hoax call.

How parents can learn to talk to the enemy



Parents and teachers must learn to communicate better to help children get the most out of school

Traditionally, it's children who are depressed by going back to school: but locking horns with teachers can also inspire fear in their parents. By Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer

The nation's schoolchildren will soon have been delivered back into the welcoming arms of teachers, allowing parents far and wide to breathe a sigh of relief as schools take over and domestic order resumes. Or will they?

For some, the new term means the unwelcome return of morning mayhem, bedtime battles and homework horrors; for others, the moment will be marked, just as unpleasantly, by rising fears about having to re-engage with their children's teachers.

Whether it is having another go at ensuring that a child is fully stretched, at being called in - again - to hear about the latest incident of misbehaviour or simply at attending the regular parent/teacher consultations, walking into school to discuss your child is a daunting and uncomfortable experience for many.

Typically, each side blames the other. Teachers complain about parents undoing their good work or about them being pushy or aggressive. Parents, on the other hand, complain that teachers put them down, do not listen to them, misconstrue the points they have to make and seem to blame them or their children for everything. During one recent parenting course that was run by a family service unit, laid on to help parents help their children at school, unhappy experiences with teachers dominated the discussions for weeks.

It is a big issue. The home/school interface is beset with an array of negative assumptions, expectations and experiences - which does not exactly bode well for the new home/school liaison in which this Government is placing so much hope.

Teachers usually explain parents' lack of co-operation or unhelpful style by highlighting parents' own unhappy school days, but that explanation doesn't always sit. Even parents who are practising teachers can get faced when it is their turn to face the music, and they, if anyone, should be comfortable in a school setting. However, for a more satisfactory

account of the problems encountered by parents, we have to look further to issues of power and self-esteem.

When it comes to power, teachers have it all while parents have next to none. Parents frequently attend consultations or other meetings with no idea of what they are likely to hear, no understanding of the systems referred to or of the jargon used and no opportunity to state in advance what they want to know. Even the most confident have to maintain a clear head so as not to be diverted from their planned agenda.

One single mother I know walked out of a meeting to discuss her child's behaviour because, on top of English not being her first language, she believed the psychological testing suggested would label her child for life and disadvantage her in her ongoing cross-national custody battle. She was so overcome with fear and confusion that she left the head-

teacher's office rather than remain there, fearful and tongue-tied.

A few preliminary explanations would have helped her enormously. Although teachers say that they feel apprehensive whenever they meet parents, they certainly hold all the cards, and some strive to keep it so.

As Barrie Irving has written in *Pastoral Care*: "Cynics may suggest that... professionals have exploited this situation as it has enabled them to retain specialist skills and knowledge, thereby affirming their expert status. By distancing parents... the uneducated and/or uninterested are denied access."

Parents would feel less exposed and more respected not only if they had some briefing prior to consultations but also had the opportunity to pose questions in advance.

Another explanation for poor attendance at school meetings is parental self-esteem. Parents with failing children are usually either low achievers them-

selves or are coping with personal difficulties. Anyone with a poor or shattered opinion of themselves will find it hard to accept their children's shortcomings because they take these personally, as an assessment of themselves. Their reaction is to defend their child and deny any wrongdoing - in order to protect themselves.

It is not surprising that parents who feel that they are the butt of teacher disapproval, and who anticipate and dread problems, are reluctant to attend meetings where they fear that they will be "insulted" again. On top of this, some parents are reluctant to treat schoolwork as important because this can undermine their view of themselves. It can be hard to value something when to do so rubs your nose in your own failure.

Quite apart from these underlying and sometimes complex dynamics, it is much harder to feel comfortable about meeting teachers and to

achieve a satisfactory outcome when those involved do not communicate as well as they might. Teachers can be as guilty as parents, though it should be part of their professionalism - and therefore their training - to know better. The two scenes described below show how clumsy handling by either side can lead to confrontation and how some simple changes of approach can produce a more co-operative and constructive encounter.

Quality home/school partnerships require good communication; and good communication entails listening, hearing and understanding, being clear about what is expected, offering information and avoiding outbursts and accusations. It also involves showing appreciation and passing on good news as well as bad. Both parents and teachers can show they have listened and understood through the tactic of summary: "So you are saying you believe some help from home

with reading would help Gita quite a lot" or "I think you are saying..." before putting the next point. Both sides can show understanding: "It must be difficult for you, Mr Taylor, if you think this is what I am saying to Tommy in class if you have 30 other children to manage at the same time..."

They can both avoid confrontation by resisting generalisations about a child; starting sentences with "I...", as in "I think Ahl could be getting on faster", is better than "You are not teaching her properly"; and explaining what works for them, as in "Priya seems happier to read when she can manage the first page", is better than "The books you give her put her right off". Both parties can do their jobs better if they are sensitive to each other's efforts and constraints and keep each other properly informed.

Children do best when parents and schools trust and respect each other. Each side should feel able to raise any worries and should expect to be listened to in return.

Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer is the author of *School Matters - And So Do Parents*, a resource pack for schools available from her on 0181 458-8404

WATCH WHAT YOU SAY

SCENE 1
Confrontational version
Teacher: Ahmed is uncooperative (blanket negative statement, presented as fact).
Parent: I don't have any trouble with him at home.
Teacher: I'm surprised. Maybe he's worse in big groups. I've got too many children to say things over and over. He's got to learn to fit in. Saeed was such a pleasure, you'd never think they were brothers.

Co-operative version
Teacher: I find Ahmed uncooperative much of the time.
Parent: Can you tell me what he does that makes you say that?

SCENE 2
Confrontational version
Teacher: Emma's lazy and won't concentrate. She will never get on at this rate.
Parent: She's not lazy at

home she concentrates when she's interested. What do you mean by "lazy"? I expect the work you set is boring.
Teacher: She's the only one who never finishes her maths sheets. And she dawdles when she has to clear up before break. These have to be done. It's not a question of making it interesting.

Co-operative version
Teacher: I know Emma could do better. She comes across as lazy, but it could be a concentration problem. Is this something you recognise from home?
Parent: Not really. Could you give me an example of her being "lazy"?
Teacher: Emma finds it hard to finish the maths sheets in the time given. And she's in another world when she's asked to tidy up. Could there be something on her mind?

LANGUAGE LABORATORY

TIPS FOR PARENTS
Do take in a note of what you really want to say, and do not be shy about referring to it.
Do raise the most important issue first, in case it gets forgotten.
Do make an appointment and think carefully about what you want to say.
Do avoid grabbing teachers in the playground and talking when you're angry.
Do remember that it's your child's work or behaviour that's at issue, not you or your parenting.
Do not take it personally, even if you feel they are blaming you.
Do trust the school with information about any family problems that may affect your child. Teachers can do a lot to help children cope.
Do remember that teachers can feel just as nervous about meeting you as you them.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS
Do treat parents' concerns and knowledge with respect. Most parents take days to find the courage to come in.
Do not react defensively to any criticism: try something on the lines of "It sounds as though you're worried about Darren..."
Do ask parents how much support they feel they can manage.
Do give parents any good feedback about a child's work or behaviour whenever possible.
Do understand how illness or divorce affect the certainty of family life.
Do check if there is anything more to discuss.
Do arrange another meeting if necessary.
Do beware provocative generalisations or comparisons with a sibling.

PASSED/FAILED

ALAN TITCHMARSH,
TV GARDENING GURU

ALAN TITCHMARSH, 49, presents *Gardener's World* and *Ground Force* on BBC2. He was Supervisor of Staff Training at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Deputy Editor of *Amateur Gardening* magazine. He has been Gardening Writer of the Year, Yorkshire Man of the Year and No 12 in *Elle's* Hip 100. His 32 books include *How to be a Supergardener* and, just out in paperback, *Alan Titchmarsh's Favourite Gardens*. His novel *M. MacGregor* is out on Monday.

All Rhodes lead to learn?
Harry Rhodes, my teacher when I was nine at Hilkey Church of England Junior School, was a lovely man. He was a keen cactus-grower and the first plants I ever bought were his cacti in little pots, costing sixpence at the school bring-and-buy sales.

I would take them home and leave them on the lido window. They thrived on neglect - and I gave them a lot of neglect.

To hell on a handcart?
My peak period was between fifteen and twenty. I took a City & Guilds in Horticulture on a day release scheme. There were a lot of no-hopers on the course, because you had to go there if you were an apprentice, but I thought, "I can do this". Instead of being at the bottom, I soared ahead to the top.

Gardening was not so sexy then as it is now, and it was very embarrassing to be seen by people still at school when I was watering the hanging baskets at home; it was that terrible age when you blush very easily. One of the guys at work sold me his greenhouse and my dad wheeled it home on a handcart: my second major embarrassment.

Personal growth area?
I then went to Hertfordshire College of Agriculture and Horticulture, full-time for a year for my National Certificate in Horticulture. This was my first time away from home. I was in a residential



Stony ground? I failed my 11-plus and went to Hilkey Secondary Modern. I really hated it. They weren't encouraging. I was always having "See me!" on my essays because they were written with too much imagination. I once wrote a synopsis of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This got 17 out of 20 - but also with "See me!"

When I asked why, the teacher said, "You used the word 'reciprocated'. Where did you get it from?" I said, "I know it". She thought I'd copied it.

Everything in gardening's lovely? From about 12 I knew gardening would be my career - I built a plastic greenhouse in the garden. At school I wasn't doing the subjects I wanted.

I was in the A-stream, and in the first term we did "rural studies", but then we were considered too clever for gardening so only the lower streams did it. I took my Art GCE a year early, then left at 15 to work for five years in the Parks Department Nursery.

block - with my own wash-basin! I thought, "I'm a big boy now". Occasionally this meant you were up at five in the morning, washing leaks for market in cold, muddy water. I took the "Amenity Option" which was a bit more colourful: beds of heather, shrubs and flowers for flowers' sake, not for commercial reasons. College was a bit commercial for me; it taught me I didn't want to grow tomatoes and lettuces for a living.

Join the Kew! Then I went on to the Royal Botanic Gardens for a three-year Diploma Course: Dip. Hort. (Kew). You worked in all the departments: Tropical, Temperate, the Arboretum. Afterwards I taught there myself. I thought I wanted to teach out, after two years, I discovered I didn't.

I'm now about to start a series of lectures in the streets called "An Evening With Alan Titchmarsh". Talking to an audience is lovely; they want to be there. In teaching, they don't want to be there.

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How on earth did I get here?

Rosemary Salisbury tells Jack O'Sullivan how she managed to rise to the top of her profession as well as raise her own family

Rosemary Salisbury often feels bemused as she looks at the roll call of headteachers celebrated in the oak-panelled hall of King Edward VI school, Retford. For more than four centuries a succession of men – a long line of reverends followed by lay masters – presided over this Nottinghamshire grammar school, which turned comprehensive in 1979. Then, in January, Mrs Salisbury took over as the school's first female headteacher. "How," she wonders, "did a little Irish Catholic woman end up as head?"

It is the type of question other successful female heads probably ask themselves occasionally. But the answer is particularly interesting in Rosemary Salisbury's case. Because, unlike many of her ambitious peers, she has really had it all. Typically, they were back at the blackboard once maternity leave was over. Their triumph came at the price of juggling work and babies, constantly worrying whether "quality time" sufficed. Mrs Salisbury is exceptional: she has reached the top after taking 10 years out of full-time teaching to raise three sons.

She has succeeded, despite having watched her husband climb the ladder in her chosen profession while she remained at home. There is a joke in the family that he was promoted each time she had a baby, successes that she no doubt relished, but might easily have sapped her own professional confidence. She recalls meeting his female colleagues.

"They would talk to me about clothes, cooking and children, but when it came to education, when I spoke they ignored me."

Indeed, her husband has been spectacularly successful – Robert Salisbury, headmaster of Garibaldi School in Mansfield, was knighted this year for turning a run-down institution into a nationally celebrated success. So King Edward's new head is also a Lady.

What, then, is the secret of Rosemary Salisbury's own career success? We're sitting in her home in the Nottinghamshire countryside, a few days after the end of term. She is not a relaxed woman. Energy, emotion and ideas pour out in equal measure. But around her is perfect order. Step into her kitchen and you are into low-key Country Living style – well polished old pine furniture and ceramic tiles, a room that blinks through ivy-covered walls onto a large enclosed garden. Not a dog-eared exercise book in sight, and certainly not an unwashed cup.

She's proud of the place, and talks



Rosemary Salisbury: she ascribes her success in getting a headship at King Edward VI School, Retford, to experience in raising children

David Burner

me through how they came to buy it for a song back in 1976, and the improvements they have made. I meet her 17-year-old son Howard, the youngest, a handsome man wondering about a gap year, trying for Oxbridge, doing work experience. She's proud of him too, constantly manoeuvring him to ask the right questions about journalism, university life, entrance exams. She's at once the teacher, the homemaker and the parent.

Rosemary Salisbury's career started like many of her contemporaries', at teacher training college, with a first job at age 21. In 1976, when opportunities were opening up for women, she was 26, on scale three, a head of year, a teacher going places. Indeed, her new husband, though six years older, was lagging behind; he was still on scale two. But she was pregnant, and resigned rather than go on maternity leave. "There was no point – I knew I wasn't coming back."

Why? "Since I was eight, I have only ever wanted to teach. It was like a vocation. Teaching was a passion. But I have equally strong views about parenting. It never occurred to me that I should try to carry on both jobs. I know it is politically incorrect. I tend to be careful in what I say. But I think women have been coming into thinking that we can have everything. I see young women trying to do a good job and to look after small children. I think they are missing out."

"These days the children are older, so I don't have to worry if I have a meeting that goes on until seven or eight, although I'm still concerned if Howard is at home on his own. Being there when they were younger meant we could enjoy doing things like going to park in the middle of the day when they felt like it. I wasn't rushing to get them off in the morning."

"I'm terribly cynical about quality time. At six or seven o'clock in the evening, all my kids wanted to do was sleep. They didn't want to play just because Mum and Dad felt able to give them that time."

"Nearly all my female contemporaries went back because they

said they had to keep their jobs. They were afraid that they would not be able to get back again. I always thought that was an excuse, although I think there was a genuine fear that they would lose ground. And some people couldn't afford to give up a job – not that we could either. Many is the time that more money went out each month than came in."

So what gave her the confidence to make a different choice? Perhaps the fact that she is Irish may have helped. Rosemary Salisbury was

raised in Northern Ireland by her mother, following the death of her father when she was 18 months old. "One of my few positive memories is that my mother was always there," she recalls. "I wanted to give that to my children."

But schooling was also her route out of a poor rural background. So education is equally prized. In short, she seems driven by two clear ideologies which could not be sacrificed for each other.

Ironically, she ascribes her subsequent success in getting a headship to experience gained while raising children. For she never gave up teaching entirely, doing two hours a week at a boys' board school just weeks after her first son was born. But most valuable of all was supply teaching – in all she worked in 14 different schools.

"Very few heads have done supply teaching," she says, "but it is an ideal opportunity to observe different management systems in a school. I saw the best and the worst. I learnt more about teaching than when I was in a full-time job."

"You would go into staff rooms and no one would speak to you. You were three rungs below the cleaners. The idea was that you had no brain, were doing it just for money and no ideas about education."

"But you often arrived in the middle of some sort of crisis, in a class that had low standards. It made me rethink teaching, and appreciate the use of humour and psychology."

Going back into full-time teaching was not easy. Her youngest was five when she returned in 1986. She was back at the lowest grade, below the level at which she left.

"I told the head that he would not see much of me before 9am and less after 3.30pm. But I worked at home after they went to bed. I must have been permanently worn out. I said if the children were suffering I would leave. But if all went well I would seek promotion."

By 1990, Rosemary Salisbury was a deputy head. Then this year she gained the prize of a headship. She succeeded even though the job interview took place three days after she had been injured in a serious car accident. "I'm telling you this not because I am special," she says, "but because I feel there are lots of women with the talent to do what I have done."

Had she not stopped to have children, Rosemary Salisbury might well have been a head by 30, certainly by 35. In the event, she was 47.

"The same age as Bob was when he became head of Garibaldi," she declares proudly.

YOUR VIEWS

Unfair to academics

As academic staff at Queen's University of Belfast, we stand squarely behind management's recently publicised aspiration for raising the international research reputation of the university. At the same time, we are deeply concerned about the mechanism which has been proposed to achieve this goal. The majority of the £25m set aside for "restructuring" has been assigned to fund a severance/early retirement scheme: a large number of academic staff have been invited to leave Queen's to be replaced by new staff. In compiling the list of targeted staff, the university focused on one criterion, namely projected activity in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise. Apparently, procedures considered germane to employment legislation drove the exercise, while respect for staff and their diverse contributions sadly was afforded less importance.

Activities which sustain the life of any university, including teaching, administrative responsibilities and external ac-

tivities, were given little consideration and, consequently, many individuals who play a full and active role in the life of Queen's, and who have helped to sustain the university through difficult times over the last 25 years, have received a letter inviting them to leave.

An academic's employment contract normally makes mention not only of research but also of teaching and administration. Indeed, for those in the community it is those aspects of our work other than research which are often most visible and appreciated.

Unfortunately, by already having assessed our worth solely in terms of projected research activity, a loud and clear message has been sent out and received by staff. Over the years, many academic staff have been encouraged by management to take on additional teaching responsibilities and administrative roles. For the individuals who have shouldered these burdens now to be targeted, and thereby to have their professional reputation irrevocably damaged, appears

to us to be unjust, unjustifiable and may be construed as reflecting a lack of understanding of how academic departments actually operate.

It is difficult to imagine how the hurt and damage which has been inflicted can be put right, and the impact of the policy on general morale, goodwill and trust is already palpable.

Many of the 103 co-signatories of this letter have long and distinguished associations with Queen's. Collectively, whether targeted or not, we are united in voicing our concern at the damage which this restructuring scheme has inflicted – and will inflict – on the university.

In the interests of Queen's, and the unique role it occupies within Northern Ireland, we urge those who have been charged with the management of the university's future to have the courage to reconsider these restructuring proposals before it is too late. JOHN KREMER, reader in psychology, and 102 other lecturers and professors, Queen's University of Belfast. <http://www.psych.qub.ac.uk>



Academics at Queen's University, Belfast, are angry at management moves to axe senior staff

Part-time students

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals has criticised the government for doing too little to assist part-time and mature students in the wake of tuition fees (*The Independent*, 10 August). This important issue is not the only constraint on continuing edu-

cation in universities.

The autonomy of British universities enabled them, over 100 years ago, to extend their teaching to people without the qualifications necessary to pursue a full degree course. This work was developed after 1945 as specialist extramural departments recruited staff who

could identify the needs of mature and part-time students. Twenty years ago, these departments began to offer special access courses to adults without formal entry requirements who wanted to read for degrees. All this accumulated expertise is now under threat. The innovative, locally rele-

vant, initiatives pioneered by extramural (later renamed adult and continuing education) departments are often incompatible with the centralising policies being forced on universities. For example, the financing of access courses and other courses of general education by universities is no longer permitted. They are defined as below degree level and hence fall within the province of further education, rather than higher education. Funding, further, so-called quality control inspections and research league tables are leading universities to curtail continuing education courses and departments which do not fit bureaucratic structures.

The Government, and many universities have failed to realise that educational methods and practices appropriate for 18-year-olds are often inappropriate for mature and part-time students.

It is a pity that adult and continuing education is under threat when their experience could contribute to the necessary changes. WILLIAM HAMPTON, Emeritus Professor, Division of Adult Continuing Education, University of Sheffield

Summertime blues

Summer-born children definitely do lag behind those born in spring or autumn and sadly Nicole Veash (*EDUCATION*, 13 August) misses a couple of points in her otherwise valuable article.

The problem did not first emerge in the Sixties. It was around when I took the 11-plus in 1948 and that infamous examination is the only measurement system I have known in 36 years in education where the problem was remedied through a points differential built into raw scores.

Commercial tests have consistently recognised age on test as significant but the whole edifice of national testing and assessment has moved on mindless to it.

It was certain to emerge in our new Key Stage testing and makes assessment at seven, for example, distinctly hazardous, given all the other factors that can distort young performance. Researchers have now found the factor persists right up to A-level. The debate has barely begun. It is not a matter of starting age, nor time in school. It is to do with position in class and teacher attitude. It is a lot to do with organising by year group. It is very much to do with the well-documented persistence of early failure.

Meanwhile many of our summer and spring-born children endure a system of assessment that distorts true ability. The least we could do is build 11-plus-style weighting into raw scores.

Our whole approach to the examination business needs drastic overhaul. MERVYN BENFORD, Managing Director in Education, Banbury, Oxfordshire

Please send your letters to Wendy Berliner, Editor, *EDUCATION*, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Please include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Fax to *EDUCATION* on 0171-293 2431. E-mail: educ@independent.co.uk

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The Leverhulme Trust invites applications from individuals for research grants to be administered by institutions. Staff employed at universities and other institutions of higher and further education in the UK, registered charities in the UK, and similar institutions in developing countries are eligible to apply. Awards cover the salary costs of a researcher or researchers of post-doctoral level to work on an original, specific and discrete research project, plus limited support costs. Overheads, equipment and other capital items are not eligible costs. Grants are normally awarded for a period of six months full-time to three years. All fields are eligible except social policy welfare; medicine; school education; archival or cataloguing work unless it directly involves or leads to important and original research; and archaeological digs. Interdisciplinary projects are especially encouraged. The principal purpose of applications must be to pursue a research project rather than to fund a particular individual or post. Replacement teaching costs are only rarely met. Students may not be employed on research grants to institutions.

Under this scheme, the Trustees are also prepared to consider both pilot projects and large projects as described hereunder.

PILOT PROJECTS

The Leverhulme Trust invites applications from individuals for research grants of up to £15,000 for pilot projects. Such grants are intended to enable a principal investigator to assess and demonstrate the feasibility of a project in terms of methods and/or sources and are, typically, for a duration of six months although longer projects are considered. The criteria and procedures governing these applications for grants are identical to those described above. An extended application will be accepted only when the results of the pilot project are available for appraisal by referees.

LARGE PROJECTS

The Trustees are prepared to consider proposals from individuals or teams for a limited number of research grants of between £250,000 and £500,000 for up to five years. The criteria and procedures governing these applications and the eligibility of proposals and costs are similar to those described above. However, since the procedures used to assess such large applications are more elaborate than those used for smaller applications, final decisions may take up to five months, or even more, from the date of the initial application.

All potential applicants should first obtain a copy of the Trust's Policies and Procedures brochure and accompanying descriptive sheets on pilot projects and large project grants by (a) writing to The Leverhulme Trust, 1 Pemberton Row, London EC4A 3BA, or (b) telephoning 0171 822 6897, or (c) sending an e-mail request to kfindlay@leverhulme.org.uk. The brochure contains an Outline Application form, which is the first step in any application.

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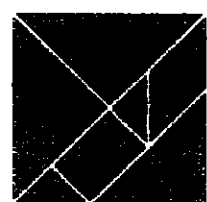
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Catherine Bennett, Manager of Quality Assurance, New Zealand Qualifications Authority (via video conference)

Heather Cairns, Director of the Learning Network, Institute for Management Development

Paul McKelvie, Regional Manager, Scottish Power Learning

David Thomas, Head of Change Leadership, BT

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FAST TRACK

GRADUATING TO THE WORLD OF WORK

Sorting out the bad pennies

With employees embellishing their CVs or committing fraud, businesses are turning to private investigators. By Stephen Overall

A lot of employee-vetting is hunch, nose and intuition, says Richard Jacques-Turner, a specialist employee investigator in charge of Paragon Investigations International, based in Hull. "If you've got a senior executive living in a tip or a cleaner with a serious casino habit, you will want to know why, and nine times out of ten, there will be something that the client should know," he says.

Not necessarily, logic dictates. The executive may have taken a vow of Franciscan austerity; the cleaner may be the beneficiary of a cranky, but loaded, aunt. But that is precisely the point, counters Jacques-Turner. "We would ask whether it makes them a less suitable employee and whether it is going to affect their work. Mistakes in recruitment can destroy businesses."

Whether or not employers have any right to know personal - and often uncomfortably personal - details about their employees' lifestyles and quirks is something of a redundant question. They certainly feel that they do have the right, and can afford to find out. As a result, employers are widely believed to be turning to employee-vetting to help them.

In the murky world of employee-vetting, every member of staff is a potential risk. Every habit, however colourful, wacky or humdrum, is a potential embarrassment. Vetting is not the sort of thing that employers will admit to, and certainly not the sort of thing that anyone keeps figures about.

Norman Smith, a former president of the Association of British Investigators, reckons that pre-employment screening is bread-and-butter work for most private detectives. Often, he says, it is just applicants for very senior, sensitive positions who are vetted; in other companies it is just those applying for graduate, managerial jobs. Few, outside the Home Office, are sufficiently paranoid to vet all applicants.

There are two major types of investigation - "up-front" and covert. The four detectives I spoke to all said that up-front investigations were far more justifiable, thorough and satisfactory, because the information is readily available and there is a chance to clarify things without the risk of breaking any laws.

For example, if someone put on their CV that they had a degree from the University of Bristol, the obvious route of inquiry - seeking confirmation from the university - is shut off, because Bristol refuses to supply such data under the belief - erroneous as it happens - that it would be breaking the data protection laws. If the subject knows they are being investigated, they can just provide a certificate which can then be verified.

Usually, all checks start with publicly available databases. The electoral roll is a beginning, followed by checks on birth certificates, mar-



Positive vetting can uncover many things that prospective employees may wish to keep secret - although it is unlikely that many of them are vampires

riage certificates, driving licences, passports, qualifications and County Court judgments and company directorships. Fiances can be checked through credit reference bureaux, such as Equifax and Info-link, which are available online for a subscription, while databases such as BT's Phonebase give details of any change of address.

Then, if anything is amiss, the investigation can go into something called a "lifestyle audit". Invariably, according to the detectives, the areas that repay closest attention are those which have anything to do with the two raciest of the Seven Deadly Sins: money and sex.

"People are not that clever," says Jacques-Turner. "With modern desktop publishing systems, it is easy to knock up a false certificate, but they don't think about the reference number. So, somewhere along the line the chain breaks down."

"I had one case of a completely false identity where everything seemed in order: birth certificate, marriage certificate and mortgage details. But the thing which really gave him away was the simple lack of information available on him."

Most recruitment, of course, re-

mains an exercise in the benefit of the doubt. The chances of employers having the time to bother checking A-level results or membership of obscure professional bodies are remote. Which leads to the common tendency to embellish the truth with encouraging additions to CVs

- a couple of extra GCSEs, or fiddling exact dates to camouflage a period of redundancy.

According to a study by one detective agency, Network Security, one in four people working in the City of London claimed to have lied on a job application.

Mike Hinds, chairman of the Association of Search and Selection Consultants, says that with rising suspicion of "CV abuse", superficial levels of vetting are undoubtedly increasing. But beyond requiring proof of qualifications and a medical history, further research remains rare.

"Telling the individual that checks will be made is a check in itself," he says. "Employers have the right to enquire only into the aspects that are relevant to the performance of the job. People have a right to privacy and most employers would hate anyone to intrude into their own affairs."

Nick Mann, the company's operations director, gives an example: "If, in the course of our investigations, we discovered that someone was gay but that they were not open about it, we would want to know why they wanted it to be a secret, and we would ask the following questions. Is what the subject does a risk? Is how much or how they do it a risk? Would the fact be an embarrassment to the employer? Is the fact or factor financially expensive? Chances are, the answers to these questions are all no, so it wouldn't be an issue."

Of course, many of these questions are subjective matters, for the judgement of the investigator; and would be enough to send any bashful homosexual, justifiably concerned about the bigotry of the corporate world, scuttling for the closet. But Mann emphasises that the investigation is entirely confidential and is done with the support of the subject.

He concedes, though, that if anyone refused vetting, conclusions might be drawn about what the subject had to hide. Job prospects might be duly harmed.

The Association of British Investigators (0181-546 3368)

THE OPEN VETTING PROCESS

THE BOYS at Praesidium call it Opus 3 and they have a slogan to sell it. The acronym stands for Open Participation, Unbiased Selection, and the slogan is "staff screening with no offence". It aims to take some of the grime from under the fingernails of job-vetting by fully involving the subject in the process. The subject must agree to it as part of taking the job offer. It goes like this:

Step 1: Having done an analysis on the risk involved in the job, there is a preliminary interview and subjects fill in a 29-question form about themselves.

Step 2: They are expected to provide proof of qualifications, their birth certificate and their passport containing details of foreign travel. They must provide two years' worth of bank statements for all accounts, as investigators look for out-of-the-ordinary millions wafting in and

out. Forensic tests will be done on any suspected forged documents. Subjects must apply to a police station to release any details of criminal convictions (at a cost of £10).

Step 3: Subjects must give five referees - people known personally or professionally - and two or three are selected and checked up on and then interviewed.

Step 4: A detailed check of public records.

Step 5: The company's sleuths visit the candidate in his or her own home for a "lifestyle evaluation". The subject has the opportunity to explain any inconsistencies or foibles that have been uncovered during the investigation.

Step 6: The finished report is presented to the client, with the risk attached to hiring the subject. All computer records are deleted and only a hard copy of the final report is kept.

A sweet song of success and synthesizers

CV

JONATHAN COLE, DIRECTOR OF COMPUTER WAREHOUSE



Jonathan Cole, 40, director of Computer Warehouse, never expected to run a multi-million pound company during his earlier career as a musician. He says that building up a business empire has all been a bit of an accident.

FOR ME, I think that the things you end up doing are the ones that you never gave much thought about. I suppose that music was my first love. From my teens upwards I always wanted to be in a band. It was during the early Seventies while there was a lot of change that went on in music at the time. I started making music when I was around 12 or 13 and was self-taught in everything. My mum never forced me to have music lessons or anything but for some reason she sent my brother to piano lessons. It's strange. I ended up becoming a musician and he's a graphic designer.

I did not actually join a band properly until I was about 17. When I was at school, I think everybody saw me becoming an accountant or a lawyer. I worked in an accountant's office on work experience when I was about 15 in the holidays and I absolutely loved it.

At first, I was mainly doing song-writing and guitar was my main instrument. But I bought a synthesizer in about 1978 and that changed everything. It was one of the very first ones and it was a big chunky thing,

more like an organ. But there was a feature on the synthesizer which created a little pattern which fascinated me. We recorded a single and eventually signed to a label in London called Realto. They were an interesting company run by Ted Heath's son. That was a fantastic time in my life and we played The Marquee and all those sorts of places around London.

Around the end of 1979, when I was 20, I was doing a BA in accounting and finance in Bristol but had reached my third year and completely lost interest. After we signed the deal in London, I decided to move there permanently.

After that, I probably talked myself into going solo. I was writing songs and playing most of the instruments on different records. I never really glanced back at that degree although it might be nice now to have some letters behind my name. I don't think it made any real difference to what I ended up doing but I can't imagine what my parents thought at the time.

I was signed as a development artist and songwriter and I also started to do lots of visual things, like videos for bands for Top of the Pops.

I met some people who had been playing for me and one of them had a deal and he asked if I wanted to do some keyboard work on his album. So I ended up doing that and realised it was something I was good at and there were not many people playing synthesizers around that time.

And then everything changed when I started to work at an instrument shop in South London which a friend of mine owned. He had loads of keyboards and I rearranged them for him and he asked me if I could come in and sell them. I ended up running their keyboard section and it gave me a chance to look at all of the new equipment which was coming through from abroad. We used to sell some pretty upmarket stuff. The only other company doing that at the time were called Sycho, who sold the really expensive £80,000 bass synthesizers which everybody used on their records.

I did that up until around 1983 when I got head-hunted to open a more general music field for Sycho, which was co-owned by Peter Gabriel and his cousin and had these fantastic offices in Conduit Street. It was a real growth area and we had a large professional client

base because our equipment was part of the Eighties' sound.

After about 1986, I could see the technology changing and coming downmarket. You could buy for just £3,000 what you only used to be able to buy for £80,000. I remember coming back from a trade show in America and telling the guys who ran Sycho that Casio had a new machine for £1,500 which they were selling for more than 20 times that I said that we needed to take this on board but they were not particularly interested, so I left.

I looked around for a few months and thought, someone's got to sell these products in the UK to the same people, they are definitely going to buy it, so I started up The Synthesizer Company on a £20,000 start-up, helped by a BE scheme. It was a scheme to help business expansion and a tax efficient way for people to invest in new companies. The equipment was coming out of Japan and we did a deal with Casio where we took three months of their supply - we took a gamble on it and it just sold.

We had to employ a couple of other people and we found this great place which used to be a Spitfire factory during World War II.

We started the company in 1987 and I had done a business plan for a year and a half but we blew that in the first three months. Our first year's turnover was something like £1.5m.

Through being involved in the music industry we started selling Apple computers for that but then realised there was a bigger market for them in the business sector.

In 1991, I created Computer Warehouse. Within two years, it was the largest Apple reseller in the UK. We pride ourselves on our mail order advertising and the joke in the office was that for years we didn't even have a warehouse.

I think my talent has been for seeing different people's changing needs for technology and how to meet this. There are so many exciting things happening across our business in audio, video and home cinema, which we are becoming more involved with.

One of the most satisfying things has been providing the technology for different cutting edge developments in music and video. Our equipment has been used by artists as diverse as The Spice Girls and Underworld.

I never regret not staying as a musician. I sometimes see people who started out at around the same time as me and it's a very hard world to work in. I think doing this has given me a much longer career.

INTERVIEW BY MARK OLIVER

Jonathan Cole mixes music and market acumen

It's not just a load of old junk mail



Students of the Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM)'s graduate apprenticeship programme

TO THE uninitiated, direct marketing probably means little more than the torrents of junk mail that pour through the letterbox urging you to buy books that you don't want or insurance policies that you don't need.

But direct marketing is becoming increasingly sophisticated and spans everything from direct mail to telemarketing and direct response television advertisements. It is no longer the preserve of mail order outfits offering limited edition figurines or holiday firms selling "once in a lifetime" trips down the Nile, but is used by major companies such as British Airways, Tesco and Ford.

"The smart companies of the future are those that will explore new methods of reaching customers and markets and direct marketing is a key factor in this equation," says Lawrence Balfe, marketing director for Heinz.

Andrew McGregor, director of marketing for The Economist, adds: "Our business depends on direct marketing. Through it we grow our circulation amongst our target audience and we build our brand." But despite its growing importance, the industry still cannot attract enough high-calibre graduates. "The industry needs about 1,000 graduates a year, so unless we convince the next generation of high-flyers that serious career opportunities exist the profession will miss out," says Derek Holder, managing director of the industry's trade body, the Institute of Direct Marketing (IDM).

The direct marketing business is no longer the poor relation of advertising. By Helen Jones

One of the problems is that direct marketing does not have the same perceived glamour as advertising. "It has been viewed as a bit lower down the food chain than advertising in terms of intellectual content although we have more planners, statisticians and econometrists than in a conventional advertising agency," says Nigel Howlett, man-

A large agency with over 60 staff is likely to offer good, structured training and give you a thorough grounding as well as looking good on your CV. However, there is less opportunity for variety and it can be harder to make your mark, says the IDM. A medium-sized agency of between 25 and 60 staff is likely to mean that graduates will have to spend more

degree in computing, maths or statistics and ideally some working experience, although a good placement is also acceptable.

However, most other roles require a degree in any subject coupled with intelligence and attitude.

Account management is the link between the agency and a client such as Ford or Tesco and an

curious, analytical and possess the ability to think laterally. A typical day might involve brainstorming a client's new campaign, commissioning research for a new product and working with a creative to interpret a brief.

Creatives generally work as a pair - an art director and a copywriter together. They both have to be able to see how words and pictures can work together to get a client's message across. Rory Sutherland, creative director of OgilvyOne, says: "In the past the creative profile of direct marketing has been lower than in above the line ad agencies but we are working to change that perception." OgilvyOne has teamed up with a number of other agencies to raise the profile of direct marketing among art college graduates through a series of creative workshops.

And for those who want a career in direct marketing but are uncertain which role they are best suited to, Kingston University is launching the world's first MA in direct marketing in September. Derek Holder says: "Direct marketing is still a fairly young and evolving profession. This new qualification will enable staff to make a far more effective contribution to the business and benefit the profession of direct marketing overall."

For more information about careers in direct marketing, call the IDM on 0181 977 5705

Direct marketing hasn't the same perceived glamour as advertising, making it easier to enter an industry where rewards can be high

aging director of direct marketing agency OgilvyOne.

Because of its image, it is therefore easier to get a job with a direct marketing agency than it is with an ad agency such as Saatchi & Saatchi. The rewards in direct marketing can also be high. "If you are good then promotion comes quickly. You can expect to be on board by the time of your early thirties with the salary, car and all the other perks to match," says a spokeswoman for the IDM.

The size of a direct marketing agency will have some bearing on your progress up the career ladder.

time "mucking in", although this does provide a wide range of experience and the chance to learn on the job. A smaller agency is likely to be less hierarchical and you will be exposed to all elements of the job, giving you a chance to learn different skills.

There are various different jobs available across all agencies and some require specialist knowledge. Because computer databases are fundamental to the way direct marketing works, IT graduates are always in demand to collate and analyse millions of customer records. Applicants will need a

account handler has to act as the "guardian" of the client's business and ensure tight budget control and on time delivery of quality work. There are no fixed periods for promotion but most start as an account executive and within 18 months rise to account manager. An account director generally needs around five years experience.

Planners have to determine the target market and understand the needs, perceptions and behaviour of consumers and then recommend a strategic approach to reach these potential customers. The IDM says that planners have to be bright,

A-Z OF EMPLOYERS IBM

Age: Over 40.
History: Although IBM was founded in the United States more than 60 years ago, it's been in the UK for only 40 or so years.

Now claiming the title of the world's largest information technology company, IBM has concerns in almost every area of the business; in the UK, it has a number of business units providing products, services and "industry solutions". In 1995 the company acquired Lotus, and a year later, Trivoli, which produces systems management products at the vanguard of the industry. It's also focusing its attention on helping companies convert to "e-businesses".

Address: In Britain alone, IBM has around 25 major sites, including London, Warwick, Manchester and Edinburgh, and a head office in Portsmouth.

There are offices in 130

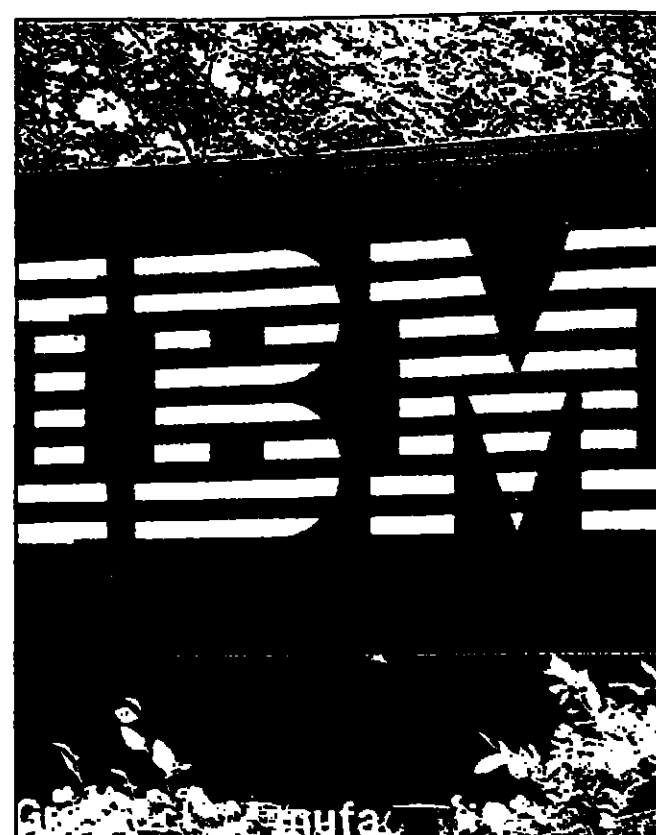
Easy to get into? This year, there are 400 vacancies in fields including technical consultancy, software development, information systems and analyst programming.

Intelligence, commitment and responsiveness are valued in applicants, says a spokeswoman.

"Although degrees with an element of computing experience are relevant for the more technical positions, many arts graduates prove to be just as successful in these areas."

For more information, see the company's website: <http://www.uk.ibm.com>.

Pay: Graduates start on a standard salary of £17,500, plus performance- and profit-related bonuses - there's a performance appraisal yearly. Training: There's ongoing training for the first two years of a graduate's time at IBM. It kicks off with three weeks of



countries around the world; the international headquarters is in New York.

Ambience: Employees wear smart-casual dress in open-plan, American-style offices, according to a spokeswoman. Operations are highly structured.

"Our outlook is focused firmly on the customer. We've made our commitment to customers loud and clear. We make customer service and quality our obsession," says the company line.

Vital statistics: IBM serves more than a billion customers in around 160 countries, and its revenue last year exceeded \$78bn, with net earnings of \$6.1bn.

In the UK the company employs 18,000 people. **Lifestyle:** Flexibility is the key: working hours and location will vary during a recruit's first few years, but there are also opportunities for foreign travel.

All graduates are invited to a three-day conference at least once a year, with seminars, sports activities and a gala dinner.

intensive induction and training at Didcot in Oxfordshire, all within the first eight weeks of employment, and is followed by job-specific training, both technical and non-technical, sometimes classroom-based.

It's possible to specialise in areas such as Lotus Notes, AIX, Novell, application development and Windows NT, and to gain external accreditation and certification. There's also a mentoring scheme, and graduates who have completed their training are sent to an assessment centre so that bosses can identify their strengths for future employment.

Facilities: All IBM sites in the UK have subsidised canteens, and many have cash points. One training site, Hursley Manor in Hampshire, also boasts a running track, a football pitch, a baseball diamond and a cricket field - plus a bar and shop.

Who's the boss? Carl G. Symon, who joined IBM in 1989 in the States, became the UK's chief executive this year.

RACHELLE THACKRAY

Do I have to retake my A-levels?

HELP DESK

YOUR CAREER PROBLEMS SOLVED

Dear Help Desk:
I HAVE recently turned 20 and two years ago completed my A-levels in German (C), geography (C), French (D) and general studies (C). Perhaps foolishly, I decided not to repeat and have since travelled and worked in various places. I have now come to the stage where I want to further my education and I am interested in the media in general, but more than that do not know.

I have looked at a few courses in broadcasting studies, but have been told that, even as a mature student, should possess at least three Bs. do not fancy taking the time to retake my A-levels as I want to move forwards, not sideways. I have been debating a short course gaining office skills - such as typing or shorthand, if it will help. Is secretarial college the answer?
Ilen Johnson

Jessie Hallam, a consulting psychologist with Career Analysts Ltd, says:
Everyone experiences this kind of dilemma at some stage. The problem is solved by learning the skills of personal and career planning as early as possible. Qualifications, of themselves, do not determine what career you should pursue or what job you may be successful at

or find our personal fulfilment in. However, they do give us access to options and opportunities. Whatever the level or type of qualification we have, we need to weigh up the kind of work that will best suit our qualities and needs so that we can redirect ourselves, or invest in the right qualifications - at as early a stage as possible.

To do this, you need objective information about yourself and reliable, insightful information on career and working cultures. A professional career analyst trained in the processes and techniques of occupational psychology can help to identify your real aptitude, interests and personality to direct your potential into the right field.

Out of this you get a realistic plan for achieving accessible and relevant goals. This rationale produces clearer personal commitment, which in turn stimulates motivation, a sense of control and greater self-esteem. The benefits of this far outweigh the cost and, more particularly, the cost and waste of being in the wrong course or in the wrong job, or wasting time chasing completely unrealistic pipe-dreams.

Justin Kent, associate director of Major Players Recruitment Consultancy, says:

You have already started the process by looking into courses and establishing the media as an area of interest. Take that research even further! First of all, try to dissect the media industry. The number of industries and professions that are directly and indirectly linked to the media is huge, ranging from newspaper and broadcast journalism to public relations and advertising.

A media or general business studies course is a good way to do this. Your A-level grades are by no means bad and will not exclude you from further education. Choose a course that includes placement work or work experience. Your local library should have the Ucas (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services) book which lists universities and colleges, their courses and the entry requirements. You also need to ask yourself what motivates you. Is it money job satisfaction, an outdoor or an office environment? By establishing this you can become more focused on where you are going. Acquiring secretarial

skills will certainly make you more employable, but if your ambition is to be a journalist then a journalism course is naturally more appropriate. Time is firmly on your side. Keep asking questions.

Pat Pearce, head of the careers service at the University of Westminster, says:

If you really do not want to repeat your A-level grades, it is important for you to find out what the going rate is for degrees related to the media in a variety of universities. My own university, for example, offers a BA in contemporary media practice which you can enter with two Cs. You will be asked not only about your A-level grades but also whether you have a portfolio of work to show, for example artwork, video scripts, TV and radio scripts. Perhaps you could spend some time preparing and combining this with a short course in IT.

If your career aim is the media, you do not have to do a degree in a media-related subject. You could do modern languages or philosophy, for example. However, any sector of the media would want to see evidence and motivation in your extra-curricular activities. Choose a subject you think you would be interested in and perform well at.



The newsroom is just one destination for those who want a career in the media

NEW FILMS

APRIL STORY/FRID

DRAGON FISH (NC)
Director: Shunji Iwai
Starring: Takako Matsui, Kaori Fuji (April Story); Miyuki Yoshimoto (Fried Dragon Fish)
April Story is a wistful drama about love and friendship centred around a teenager beginning university. *Fried Dragon Fish* is a tongue-in-cheek cop thriller. Both demonstrate a lack of imagination and a tendency to fall back on the mannerisms of their respective genres. *West End: ICA Cinema*

THE HORSE WHISPERER (PG)

Director: Robert Redford
Starring: Robert Redford, Kristin Scott Thomas
Robert Redford has never directed himself before, and we should be grateful - the love-affair on screen between Robert Redford and Kristin Scott Thomas is one of the most intensely unsettling ever seen. He plays Tom Booker, a Montana farmer who specialises in equine psychology. A New York magazine editor (Kristin Scott Thomas) whose daughter has been traumatised in a riding accident brings her daughter and the girl's horse to Booker, hoping for them to be cured. The picture is efficiently acted, but it's despicably shallow. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Clapham Picture House, Hammersmith Virgin, Notting Hill Coronet, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Screen on Baker Street, Screen on the Hill, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road*

LOCK, STOCK AND TWO SMOKING BARRELS (R)

Director: Guy Ritchie
Starring: Dexton Fletcher, Vinnie Jones
While *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* mixes deadpan humour with cold brutality à la Tarantino, the film's defining characteristic is its resilient morality.
Ritchie's direction is showy to the point of

distraction, but, beneath the cruel violence and coarse humour, this is a nostalgic piece, as hinted at by the closing nod to *The Italian Job*. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on Baker St, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

MR NICE GUY (15)

Director: Sam Hoang
Starring: Jackie Chan, Richard Norton, Miki Lee
This largely disappointing addition to Jackie Chan's oeuvre does have its moments. But the combination of comedy and adventure doesn't gel. *West End: Virgin Trocadero*

THE PROPOSITION (15)

Director: Kenneth Branagh
Starring: Kenneth Branagh, Madeleine Stowe
Historical drama unavailable for preview at time of going to press. *West End: ABC Panton Street*

THE REAL HOWARD SPITZ (PG)

Director: Vadim Jean
Starring: Kelsey Grammer, Amanda Donohoe
See *The Independent Recommends*, right. *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero*

THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG)

Director: David Mamet
Starring: Campbell Scott, Steve Martin
David Mamet's intricate little thriller is a playful exercise in twisting a plot until it looks; there is a scientific detachment about the way he explores every permutation of his Kafkaesque scenario, though the movie is also slyly funny. *West End: Gate Notting Hill, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Phoenix Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket, Warner Village West End*

Ryan Gilbey

THE INDEPENDENT RECOMMENDS



Film Ryan Gilbey

THE BRITISH director Vadim Jean has had a distinctly variable career. After co-directing *Leon the Pig Farmer*, he bounced from the horror movie *Beyond Bedlam* to the sentimental drama *Clockwork Mike*. What a surprise that he should find himself on safe ground with *The Real Howard Spitz*, a sharp and funny family comedy which is as enjoyable for adults as it is for kids. Kelsey Grammer (*above*), best known as Frasier, plays a failed crime novelist who turns to writing children's books, only to find his hatred of children a slight disadvantage. On general release. What pleases the thriller *Gang Related* offers are largely derived from the assorted u-turns and blind alleys it takes. The film escalates into an underworld farce; now and then it even glistens with the tantalising oily sheen of pure trash. On general release

Theatre Dominic Cavendish

ARTHUR WING PINERO'S 1904 comedy *A Wife without a Smile* (*below*) is given a well-calculated revival by Dominic Hill. The play looks at the relationship between maturity and humour, focusing on marriage where the wife is alienated by her husband's puerile antics. The cast milk plenty of laughs out of characters who are far less funny than they think they are. *Orange Tree, 1 Clarence Street, Richmond (0181-940 3633) 7.45pm*. Alternatively, you could try Ben Crocker's revival of Terry Johnson's hit farce *Dead Funny*, with Maria McEldane as the wife surrounded by a group of comedy obsessives. The comedy of humourlessness, *Nineties-style*. *Northcott Theatre, Exeter (01392 493493) 7.30pm*



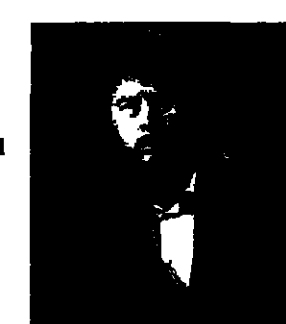
Pop Tim Perry

IF YOU still haven't heard the debut album by LA six-piece Jurassic 5, then you're missing out on some of the finest hip hop of the year. There's no gangsta waffling in this mix of happy sounds that forge sheer creativity out of a warm, old-school backdrop. While Cut Chemist and DJ Numan work manically on the decks, the other four rap and howl to create one big party, making this the unmissable gig of the day. *Dingwalls, London NW1 (0171-267 1577) 8pm*. Bradford's long-running poppy rockers *Terrorvision* (*above*) are one of those bands which have had more hits than perhaps we all realise. Tonight starts yet another tour and while they'll almost certainly run through "My House", "Oblivion", "Pretend Best Friend" and "Alice, What's the Matter", they'll also be keen to hammer home new material that just might get them back into the spotlight after a couple of quiet years. *Trovi, Buxley (01244 546201) 8pm*



Classical Duncan Hadfield

COMMISSIONED BY the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Sir Harrison Birtwistle's major new large-scale orchestral work, *Ecoy*, receives its European premiere at the Proms tonight. *Ecoy* has a subtitle: "Sequences for 23-59-50", or "the second before midnight", as the composer says. Birtwistle (*below*) now plots *Ecoy* as the central panel of a triptych, further describing it as examining "a way out and a way in at the same time". Daniel Barenboim conducts. *Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 (0171-589 8212) 7.30pm*. Tonight's recital by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra features an unusual array of pieces by Beethoven. On the programme is the Choral Fantasia, the Triple Concerto, and the complete incidental music Beethoven wrote to Goethe's play *Egmont*. The concert requires a large input of guests. Aside from the Edinburgh Festival Chorus, the *Egmont* music features soprano Sophie Daneman and narrator Peter Stein. *Usher Hall, Edinburgh (0131-473 2000) 7pm*



GENERAL RELEASE

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD (U)
A perfect antidote to the bombast of *Armageddon* can be found in Michael Curtiz's merry and inventive romp, one of the greatest swashbucklers ever made. *West End: Clapham Picture House*

ARMAGEDDON (12)
This deeply stupid film purports to be a tender love story, a meaty action adventure and a global disaster movie in which a meteor is on a collision course with Earth. Every moment is carefully engineered to include something for all the family, yet its jumble of styles will end up pleasing no one. *West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

THE AVENGERS (12)
Ralph Fiennes dons the bowler hat and wields the cane as Steed, Uma Thurman puns herself into a cat suit as Emma Peel, while Sean Connery sashays around in a kilt as August De Winter. *West End: Odeon Kensington, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

BARNEY'S GREAT ADVENTURE (U)
Feature-length exploits for the big, jolly dinosaur whose blend of nursery rhymes, day-glo colours and moral lessons makes him ideal for the more understanding pre-school viewer - but an endurance test for anyone else. *West End: UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero*

LE BOSSU (15)
Sumptuous swashbucklers are fast becoming French cinema's stock-in-trade. This effort doesn't break much new ground, but is acted and shot with such magnificent braggadocio that its lack of originality is never a problem. *West End: Curzon Mayfair, Richmond Filmhouse*

THE CASTLE (15)
When his family home is threatened with demolition to make way for an airport, truck driver Darryl Kerrigan (Michael Caine), together with his family and friends, decides to fight back and stand up for his rights. *West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Swiss Cottage*

THE DAYTRIPPERS (15)
Worried that her publisher husband (Stanley Tucci) may be having an affair, Eliza (Hope Davis) confides in her parents, only to find that the whole family insists on accompanying her to Manhattan for the day to confront him. Writer-director Greg Mottola charts the tensions of the family car journey with unerring wit. *West End: Odeon Camden Town, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket*

DR DOLITTLE (PG)
Within the restrictions of a PG certificate, Eddie Murphy shows that his talents are more pliable than they might first have appeared. *West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

EVE'S BAYOU (15)
Rites of passage drama set in Louisiana locations which have been devalued by too many Southern Comfort ads. Despite some intuitive observations, this feels for the most part like reheated *Fried Green Tomatoes*. *West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Plaza, Rio Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero*

FIRELIGHT (15)
Starchy 19th-century melodrama starring Sophie Marceau as a Swiss governess who bears a child for the wealthy aristocrat Stephen Dillane, and then devotes the rest of her life to finding the girl. *West End: Curzon Minerva*

GADJÓ DILÓ (15)
Stephane, a young Parisian, journeys through the rural Romania on a quest for Nora Luca, the gypsy singer whose music he discovered through his father. There is a warmth and humour to the gypsy singer and an integrity which pushes this film storytelling and an integrity which pushes this film way beyond being mere sentimental travelogue. *West End: Renoir*

GANG RELATED (15)
See *The Independent Recommends*, above. *West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Virgin Trocadero*

GODZILLA (PG)
The team which cooked up such blockbusters as *Star Wars* and *Independence Day* is generally very adept at constructing enjoyable adventures. Unfortunately, here their light touch has deserted them. Starring Matthew Broderick, Jean Reno and Maria Piliou. *West End: Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Camden Town, UCI Whiteleys*

HANA-BI (18)
Director-star Kitano picked up the Golden Lion at last year's Venice Film Festival with this violent yet elegant portrait of a brutal Japanese policeman pushed over the edge by his traumatic personal life. *West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Metro*

THE LITTLE MERMAID (U)
This sprightly adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's story began a string of hits for the newly rejuvenated Disney Studios. Pleasantly jazzy holiday fare. *West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Warner Village West End*

LOST IN SPACE (PG)
Lost in Space is yet another cult 1960s television series to get an expensive makeover, but the filmmakers have remained faithful to the original tone and the movie looks terrific. *West End: Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea*

LOVE AND DEATH ON LONG ISLAND (15)
A warm, subtle comedy starring John Hurt as a reclusive widower who becomes obsessed with a young film actor (Jason Priestley). *West End: ABC Piccadilly*

THE MAGIC SWORD: QUEST FOR CAMELOT (U)
The first full-length product of Warners' new animation division, this Arthurian adventure seems even cheesier than the average Disney effort. But there's an edge of genuine weirdness which will keep parents entertained, if it doesn't frighten children out of their wits. *West End: Odeon Marble Arch, Rio Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End*

METROLAND (18)
Seventies suburban morality tale in which Christian Bale plays a man festering somewhere in the commuter belt when his oldest friend thinks that he ought to be out having fun. There are some endearing moments, but, on the whole, director Philip Saville shows a dispiriting lack of ambition. *West End: Metro, Virgin Haymarket*

THE WEDDING SINGER (12)
Senselessly dumb but very winning comedy about a romantic wedding singer (Adam Sandler) who falls for a waitress (Drew Barrymore), only to find that she's already engaged to someone else. *West End: Warner Village West End*

THE X-FILES (15)
David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson reprise their roles as FBI agents Mulder and Scully and, for their first big-screen outing, get a meaty communitarianism on involving a shifty secret government and a deadly virus from outer space. Duchovny and Anderson are most engaging; through little dialogue and even less facial movement they manage to convey great tenderness. *West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Shaftesbury Avenue, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Odeon West End, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero*

ZERO EFFECT (15)
Pleasant thriller starring Bill Pullman as Daryl Zero, the world's greatest private investigator. Ultimately, the film feels a little shallow but it puts a smile on your face. *West End: Clapham Picture House, Warner Village West End*

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET
(0171-935 9772) • Baker Street
Psycho 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
The X-Files 2.20pm, 5.30pm, 8.20pm

ABC PANTON STREET
(0171-437 0631) • Piccadilly
Circus The Big Lebowski 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm
Jackie Brown 1.30pm, 4.40pm, 7.45pm
Lies 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 7.45pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm
The Proposition 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC PICCADILLY
(0171-437 3561) • Piccadilly
Circus Lethal Weapon 1.05pm, 3.30pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm
Lies 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 7.45pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm
The Proposition 1.10pm, 3.40pm, 6pm, 8.25pm

ABC SHAFTESBURY AVENUE
(0171-437 6279) • Shaftesbury
Square/Tottenham Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC SWISS CENTRE
(0171-439 4470) • Leicester
Square/Piccadilly Circus
Deco 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0171-536 6148) • Tottenham
Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0171-536 6148) • Tottenham
Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0171-536 6148) • Tottenham
Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
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Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
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Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

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Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0171-536 6148) • Tottenham
Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD
(0171-536 6148) • Tottenham
Court Road
Hana-Bi 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

ODEON CAMDEN TOWN
(0171-315 4229) • Camden Town
Armageddon 8.15pm, 11.30pm
The Daytrippers 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6pm
Godzilla 11.50am, The Horse
Whisperer 12.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking
Barrels 12.15pm, 2.55pm, 5.35pm, 8.15pm, 8.40pm
The Spanish Prisoner 2.50pm, 5.50pm, 8.55pm
The X-Files 12.45pm, 3.20pm, 6.05pm, 8.50pm

ODEON HAYMARKET
(0181-315 4212) • Piccadilly
Circus The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.45pm, 9.30pm

ODEON KENSINGTON
(0181-315 4214) • High Street
Kensington Armageddon 1.45pm, 5.10pm, 8.35pm
The Avengers 3pm, 7.30pm, 9.50pm
Dr Dolittle 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 7.20pm
The Horse Whisperer 1.25pm, 5.05pm, 8.45pm
The Little Mermaid 11.40am, Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm
The X-Files 12.45pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.30pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE
(0181-315 4215) • Leicester
Square The Horse Whisperer 12.50pm, 4.15pm, 7.50pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH
(0181-315 4216) • Marble Arch
Armageddon 1.50pm, 5.10pm, 8.30pm
Dr Dolittle 12.20pm, 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 9.05pm
The Horse Whisperer 1.15pm, 5.05pm, 8.40pm
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 5.05pm, 8.45pm

ODEON MEZZANINE
(0181-315 4215) • Leicester
Square The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm
Titanic 12.05pm, 3.45pm, 7.25pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE
(0181-315 4220) • Swiss Cottage
Armageddon 1.45pm, 5.10pm, 8.35pm
The Avengers 3pm, 7.30pm, 9.50pm
Dr Dolittle 12.15pm, 2.25pm, 4.35pm, 7.20pm
The Horse Whisperer 1.25pm, 5.05pm, 8.45pm
The Little Mermaid 11.40am, Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 7pm, 9.40pm
The X-Files 12.45pm, 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.30pm

ODEON WEST END
(0181-315 4221) • Leicester
Square The X-Files 1.15pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm
Titanic 12.05pm, 3.45pm, 7.25pm

PHOENIX CINEMA
(0181-444 6789) • East Finchley
The Spanish Prisoner 2pm, 4.20pm, 6.40pm, 9pm

PLAZA
(0171-437 1234) • Piccadilly
Circus Armageddon 1.30pm, 4.55pm, 8pm
Eve's Bayou 1.45pm, 3.15pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm, 3pm, 6pm, 8.40pm
Sliding Doors 1pm, 3.25pm, 6.05pm, 8.25pm

RENOIR
(0171-437 8402) • Russell Square
Dance of the Vampires 1.25pm, 5.50pm, 8.45pm, 8.50pm, 9.50pm
Dino 2.10pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

RIO CINEMA
(0171-486 0036) • Baker Street
The Magic Sword: Quest For Camelot 11.30am, 2pm, 4.15pm

RITZY CINEMA
(0171-737 2121/733 2229) • Bricket Road
Eve's Bayou 1.45pm, 4.25pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm
Life Is All You Get 2pm
The Little Mermaid 10.30am, Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.55pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm, 9pm
Mr Magoo 10.30am, The Spanish Prisoner 1.20am, 1.40pm, 4.05pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm
The X-Files 11.15am, 1.50pm, 4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm

SCREEN ON BAKER STREET
(0171-437 0631) • Baker Street
The Horse Whisperer 3.50pm, 7.45pm
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 3.25pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm

SCREEN ON THE GREEN
(0171-226 3520) • Angel/Highbury
The Spanish Prisoner 3.45pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm

SCREEN ON THE HILL
(0171-435 3366) • Belisle Park
The Horse Whisperer 3.50pm, 7.50pm

UCI WHITELEYS
(0171-792 3332) • Baywater/
Queensway Armageddon 1.20pm, 8.25pm
Lost in Space 8.20pm, 11.40pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm
Barney's Great Adventure 11.15pm, Dr Dolittle 11am, 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm
Eve's Bayou 4.35pm, 7.05pm, 9.40pm
Godzilla 3.25pm, 6.05pm, 8.45pm
Point Blank 8.50pm
The Horse Whisperer 1.05pm, 5.05pm, 8.40pm
The Little Mermaid 11.20am
Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm
The X-Files 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm
Quest For Camelot 12.10pm, 2.20pm
The Real Howard Spitz 12.05pm, 2.25pm, 4.45pm, 7.05pm, 9.30pm
The X-Files 12.50pm, 3.50pm, 8.35pm, 9.20pm

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The X-Files 1.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.45pm
Quest For Camelot 12.10pm, 2.20pm
The Real Howard Spitz 12.05pm, 2

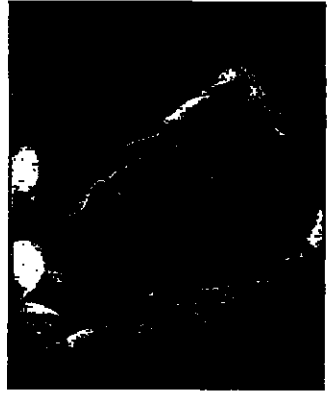
THURSDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

AFTER OIL, the world's most important commodity is coffee, according to A Hellish Brew (9.30am RA). First used by monks as an aid to surviving long periods of prayer, caffeine now has most of the working world dependent on it. Kicking off in 5th-century Yemen, this new series charts the history and winding journey of the coffee bean, through Ethiopia, the

Middle East and finally to Europe. Trevor Nunn might be on the lookout for something a bit stronger after listening to Between Ourselves (9.30pm RA), a discussion programme in which Sir Peter Hall and Sir Richard Eyre (right) battle it out to see who had the worst time at the helm of the National Theatre. Poor lambs.

FIONA STURGES



12.00 - 12.04 News Headlines; Shipping Forecast 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast 11.30 - 12.00 Shipping in Parliament.

Radio 5 Live
(95.3, 90.8kHz MW)
6.00 The Breakfast Programme.
12.00 Nicky Campbell.
12.00 The Midday News.
1.00 Olkroyd and Co.
4.00 Nationwide.
7.00 News Extra.
7.30 Gower's Cricket Weekly.
David Gower and his guests review the week's cricket action and look forward to Saturday's NatWest Trophy final. Have your say on 0500 905952.
9.00 Inside Edge. Rob Barnett and the team investigate the issues that affect the sporting world.
10.00 Late Night Live. With Nick Robinson. Including the day's sports round-up at 10.30, a late night news briefing at 11.00, and at 11.15 The Financial World Tonight.
1.00 Nightline.
5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

Classic FM
(102.1, 101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey. 8.00 Henry Kelly.
12.00 Requests. 2.00 Concerto.
3.00 Jamie Cullum. 6.30 Newsnight.
7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven.
9.00 Evening Concert.
11.00 Alan Martin. 2.00 Concerto.
3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

Virgin Radio
(125, 137-120kHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.00 Chris Evans. 9.30 Bobby Horn. 1.00 Nick Abbot. 4.00 Mark Forster. 6.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 7.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 8.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 9.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 10.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 11.00 The Alan Partridge Show. 12.00 The Alan Partridge Show.

World Service
(198kHz LW)
1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Westway. 1.45 Britain Today. 2.00 Newsdesk. 2.30 Composer of the Month. 3.00 Newsdesk. 3.30 Focus on Faith. 4.00 World News. 4.30 World Business Report. 4.45 Sports Roundup. 4.50 - 7.00 The World Today.

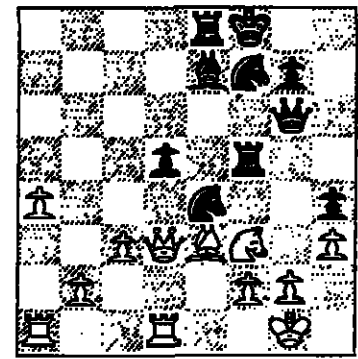
Talk Radio
7.00 Bill Overton and Kirsty Young. 8.00 Scott Chisholm. 1.00 Lord Alton of Liverpool. 2.00 Tommy Boyd. 3.00 Peter Dinklage. 4.00 Nick Abbot. 5.00 James Whale. 6.00 Ian Collins. 7.00 - 7.00 The Early Show with Bill Overton.

Radio 4 LW
(198kHz)
9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



THE SECOND Mind Sports Olympiad took place last week at the Novotel in Hammersmith. More than 2,200 competitors contested 40 different disciplines including bridge, Go, Shogi, speed-reading, memory feats, IQ, Scrabble, crosswords and, of course, chess.

The main chess event was a 15-round Quickplay. Sadly, the excellent pecuniary conditions of last year were not repeated. But there was one glittering prize, a pair of round-the-world air tickets courtesy of British Airways, after which 80 competitors, including three grandmasters, set off in pursuit last Monday, at a rate of three rounds a day.

After serious slaughter the three grandmasters ran out ahead of all opposition. The Gold Medalist on Friday night was Stuart Conquest on a splendid 13/15, a point ahead of Jim Plaskett and Aaron Summerscale on 12, with Plaskett taking the Silver on tie-break.

Conquest was a most apt and worthy winner. An excellent linguist who speaks French and German fluently, has a Spanish girlfriend with whom he converses in that language, and can certainly manage hits of Italian, Portuguese and no doubt several more, he is an inveterate traveller, who always likes to stay on an event in an interesting place. I can't think of a British player who would use the round-the-world tickets better.

Quickplay chess is often chaotic. The Russian IM's 12. Bxf5? was shown to be rather speculative by

Black's excellent 16...N7f1. But White had ample compensation for the piece, before he lost the plot completely with 31 a5??

White: Alexander Cherniav
Black: Stuart Conquest
Mind Sports 1998
Sicilian 2 c3

1 e4 e5	20 Rd1 Qb7
2 Nf3 c6	21 Be3 Nd5
3 c3 b5	22 Bd4 b5
4 d4 Bb7	23 Qd2 Nf6
5 Bd3 Nf6	24 Nh4 Qe4
6 Qe2 Be7	25 Nf5 h4
7 0-0 Ne5	26 h3 Rb5
8 e5 Nd5	27 Bxa7 Qg6
9 dxc5 bxc5	28 Be3 d5
10 Na3 Qc7	29 Qd3 Ne4
11 Nc4 f5	30 a4 Rf5 (see diagram)
12 Nf5? Kxf5	31 a5?? Rxf5
13 Nd5+ Kf6	32 Qxd5 Rxf3
14 Qd5 Nf6	33 a6 Rxf3
15 Qx5+ Nf6	34 Kxf3 h3
16 Nxb7 N7f1	35 Rd2 Nxf2
17 Nxc5 Qxc5	36 Qxd2 Bc5 0-1
18 Qd5 Qd5	
19 Qe2 Re8	

POKER

DAVID SPANIER

YOU ARE at the final table of a poker tournament. The prize money distribution is as follows: first prize, £5,000; second, £2,500; third, £1,000; fourth, £500; fifth, £200; and sixth, £100. The blinds (forced opening bets from the first two players on each deal) are £200 and £400. You have only £200 in chips left, so you don't have a lot to think about - or do you? - especially when you find two aces in the hole.

In this situation, a fairly loose player is on the big blind and goes all-in for his last £300. The rest of the players all have fairly large stacks. The player under the gun (first to act) is fairly tight and has a lot of chips left, and just calls. Everyone folds to you.

With £900 in the pot (of which you could win only £600) this is a tricky situation. Given the tournament pay-off structure, the difference between sixth and fifth place is £400. Even if the loose player wins the hand, he will go all-in at least once more before you are on the blind. The small blind is almost certain to call for another £100. And even with a four-handed pot your pocket rockets are favourite.

But there is also a significant chance that you will lose. If you fold, there is probably a 65 per cent chance or higher that the loose

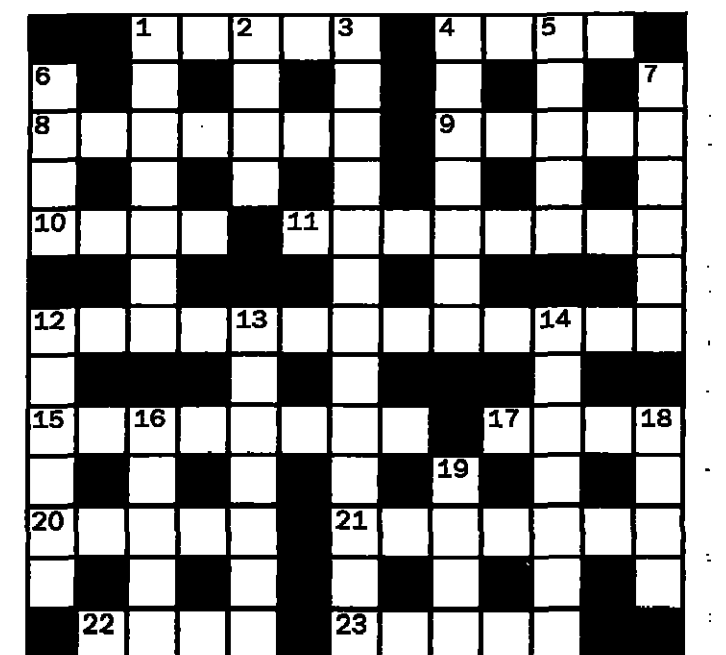
player will be eliminated, and even if he wins, there is probably another 50 per cent chance that he will be eliminated before your blind. Combined, this means that there is more than an 80 per cent chance that you can win another £400 in prize money by folding!

In real life, however, I don't think anyone would ever put down aces in this position. I took this admittedly somewhat far-out situation from the first issue of a new magazine called *Poker Digest*. This new venture is edited and published by the redoubtable June Field, founder of the highly successful *Card Player*. *Poker Digest* will appear fortnightly in alternate fortnights from *Card Player*, and will be run by Linda Johnson - so there is now a magazine devoted to poker coming out every week. The first issue of *Poker Digest* looks professional, as you would expect from June. It profiles the new world champion, Scotty Nguyen, and has a number of expert articles, including a guide tour of Asian games. June says that the magazine is "dedicated to improving your game and your lifestyle".

Poker Digest, 1455 East Tropicana, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119, \$2.95 per issue

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No. 3706 Thursday 3 September



- ACROSS**
- Wedge (5)
 - River at Oxford (4)
 - Keepsake (7)
 - Plymouth bowler playing big part in victory? (5)
 - Equipment (4)
 - Straightforward (5-3)
 - One doing one's own thing (13)
 - Heroic story (8)
 - Derided (4)
 - Acquire knowledge (5)
 - Inflatable aircraft (7)
 - Depend (4)
 - Relieves (5)

- DOWN**
- Order (7)
 - Possesses (4)
 - Well-informed (13)
 - US state (7)
 - Biblical patriarch (5)
 - Self-satisfied (4)
 - Group of six (6)
 - Frozen spike (6)
 - Job opportunity (7)
 - Profane (7)
 - Falsely implicate in crime (5)
 - Rod (4)
 - In addition to (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Pinsters, 5 Seng (Plasticine), 9 Niece, 10 Violate, 11 Tabledtalk, 14 Authentic, 16 Decoupage, 20 Taffeta, 21 Motel, 22 Here, 23 Bypassed, DOWN: 1 Puncual, 2 Accraby, 3 Theme, 4 Revolutionary, 6 Exam, 7 Need, 8 Poetic, 12 Statues, 13 Educated, 15 Eleven, 17 Rumba, 18 Inch, 19 Afar.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

THE EVERGREEN Julie Christie (right), nominated for an Oscar this year, made her name more than 30 years ago in films such as Doctor Zhivago (1965), David Lean's meticulous reading of the novel by Boris Pasternak. In this enduring tale, set in Russia in the early part of the century, she plays the lover of a doctor (Omar Sharif) who becomes entangled in the First World War and is banished for writing poetry. Lovingly told, the

film boasts a superior script, photography, and music, for which Robert Bolt, Frederick A Young and Maurice Jarre respectively won Oscars. Not only is *Amf Wiedersehen*, Pet (1965 UK Gold) one of the most acute social comedies of the 1960s, it also launched the TV careers of Kevin Whately, Jimmy Nail, Timothy Spall and Tim Healy. Watch the repeats and see how young they once were.

JAMES RAMPTON



(786336) 10.00 Medical Detectives (786336), 10.00 Forensic Detectives (786336), 12.00 Flightline (786336), 12.30 Top Mates (786336), 12.00 Wonders of Weather (786336), 2.00 Close.

Sky 1
8.00 Tattooed Teenage Alien Fighters (786336), 8.30 Street Shards (786336), 9.00 Geriatric and Friends (786336), 9.30 The Simpsons (786336), 10.00 Games World (786336), 10.30 Games World (786336), 11.00 Just Kidding (786336), 11.30 The New Adventures of Superman (786336), 12.00 Married with Children (786336), 12.30 M*A*S*H (786336), 1.00 Gerald K Collection (786336), 1.30 Special K Collection (786336), 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (786336), 2.30 Jerry Jones (786336), 3.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 3.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 4.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 4.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 5.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 6.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 6.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 7.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 7.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 8.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 8.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 9.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (786336), 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THURSDAY TELEVISION

THE THURSDAY REVIEW
The Independent 3 September 1998



JASPER REES TELEVISION REVIEW

DOCUMENTARIES ARE a bit like "it" being an ability to seduce clients, but also the parallel ability to seduce a camera. The same basic input, cramped dimensions and desperate utilization of available space. It's the people you find inside them that give them their individual character. They're also cheap to build, and surprisingly valuable on the modern market, which is why ITV has announced plans this week to build another 30 docu-soaps.

As they wake up this morning and drive in their injected company cars to offices linked with the big of heart-palms, sedate agents everywhere can allow themselves to feel even more smug than usual. In their very own bespoke docu-soap, they have sold the biggest, most of all, that a universally vilified profession is peopled by some quite nice chaps, actually.

It may well be that. The Estate Agents (EATV) found its eponymous subjects on their best behaviour. If you've ever dealt with one, you wouldn't tell it past them. There was a telling scene where one agent, showing some clients round a property, flailed a quick, left-handed salute at the camera. As if he had something to sell to the programme, too, which wouldn't be charging on it.

A confirmation of the unvarnished grotesques would have been more entertaining, but the series, about the Bristol, cut its losses and chose instead to focus on the venalities in the agency's clients. In order to be closer to the money, one vendor was putting her own house, complete with gold-plated interior, on the market.

However, she wouldn't move to within walking distance of the church for less than £300,000. If it wasn't greed, it was lust. A much younger female buyer with her own used the viewings as a chance to flirt with the fetching male trainee agent, and, it must be said, to make several libidinal passes at the camera while she was at it. We met this poor boy's perfectly nice girlfriend, and understood why he seemed reluctant to play ball with a woman he didn't know in order to sell her a flat. By the end of the programme, he had been seduced throughly, mercifully, not on him. "He

BBC1

- 6.00 Business Breakfast** (6054). 7.00 News (7) (67629). 8.00 Sex Wars (5) (700864). 8.40 Breakers (5) (750574). 10.05 Top Tip Challenge (5) (697203). 10.30 Daily Live (5) (745137). 10.55 News: Regional News: Weather (7) (155593). 11.00 Style Challenge (5) (765707). 11.25 Carl Cook: Won't Cook (5) (773357). 12.00 Through the Keyhole (5) (773357). 12.45 News: Regional News: Weather (7) (155593). 1.00 News: Weather (7) (155593). 1.30 Regional News and Weather (4) (155593). 1.40 News: Weather (7) (155593). 2.05 News: Weather (7) (155593). 2.30 News: Weather (7) (155593). 3.15 The Weather Show (5) (728152).
- 3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays** (5) (728157). 3.45 The Big World of Richard Scarry (5) (701776).
- 4.00 Children's BBC: Rugs** (5) (728157). 4.35 Cartoon Cinema (5) (730785). 5.00 Newsroom (5) (730785). 5.10 Byer Grove (5) (730785). 5.35 News: Weather (7) (77).
- 6.00 News: Weather** (7) (77).
- 6.30 Newsroom South East** (7) (67).
- 7.00 Value for Money**. Exhaustive reporting on car washing, shopping stress and where to eat with children (5) (73583).
- 7.30 EastEnders**. Phil and Grant about Peggy and Frank. Pat turns to Frank for advice and Grant finally springs the grand plans to go unarmoured on poor old Jill (5) (74).
- 8.00 Changing Rooms**. Victorian reception: Linda Barker goes modern minimalist. Laurence Llewellyn-Bowen runs the show (5) (7421).
- 8.30 The Shop**. Selfridges invites film in to equal on the wall (5) (7048). See *Documentary of the Day*, below.
- 9.00 Party Political Broadcast by the Liberal Democrats** (5) (745357).
- 9.05 News: Regional News: Weather** (7) (67629).
- 9.35 Inside Story**. John Farnham talks candidly about his relationship with his brother, John, and explores the events that led to the latter's suicide in May the year (5) (77113). See *Profile of the Day*, below.
- 10.25 Chef!** Last episode of the questionable cookery series. As James heads for Jamaica, Rochelle invites Gareth on a trip to Paris (5) (732883).
- 10.55 BBC Proms 98**. More music related to the movies. The BBC National Orchestra of Wales and conductor Richard Davis perform Dariusz Sroczyński's *Apprentice*, Strauss's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and Szymanowski's *Scottish Suite* (5) (655828).
- 12.00 FILM: Doctor in Love** (Ralph Thomas 1980 UK). Off-played, creating Britpics. Stars Michael Craig, Virginia Madsen, Leslie Phillips and James Robertson (5) (75484).
- 1.45 John BBC News 24** (6527807). To Gem.

BBC2

- 6.50 Projecting Visions** (640738). 6.55 What You Never Knew about Sex (566135). 7.00 Children's BBC: Spider-Man (5) (700864). 7.30 News: Weather (7) (698661). 7.50 Mr Bean (5) (725609). 7.45 Shur's Adventures (5) (457970). 8.40 Gai Your Own Back (5) (743789). 8.55 X-Men (5) (743789). 9.30 Ocean Odyssey (5) (743789). 10.00 Blake's 5 (5) (743789). 10.25 The Body (5) (743789). 10.40 News: Weather (7) (698661). 11.00 News: Weather (7) (698661). 11.45 News: Weather (7) (698661). 12.00 News: Weather (7) (698661). 12.30 News: Weather (7) (698661). 1.00 News: Weather (7) (698661). 1.30 News: Weather (7) (698661). 1.40 News: Weather (7) (698661). 2.05 News: Weather (7) (698661). 2.30 News: Weather (7) (698661). 3.15 News: Weather (7) (698661). 3.45 News: Weather (7) (698661). 4.15 News: Weather (7) (698661). 4.45 News: Weather (7) (698661). 5.15 News: Weather (7) (698661). 5.45 News: Weather (7) (698661). 6.15 News: Weather (7) (698661). 6.45 News: Weather (7) (698661). 7.15 News: Weather 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